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THE IOWA
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AUL O'NEILL,
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William Greider

HE CHILDREN
OF MARX AND
COCA-COLA:
David Thomson
on Godard
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LETTERS

Letters



CHRISTOPH NIEMANN

FOODIE BLUES

Los Angeles

■ Marc Cooper well describes the stakes in the California grocery strike—a critical struggle against corporate greed and to defend workers' healthcare ["Supermarket Showdown," Jan. 12/19]. But he gets the Teamsters story wrong when he writes, "The Teamsters say they have no choice but to send their drivers back to work." By "the Teamsters" he means Teamsters vice president Jim Santangelo, not the rank-and-file warehouse workers, office clerks and drivers. Santangelo and the Hoffa leadership had a choice, and they chose to fold.

In fact, as of early January, 2,000 Safeway/Vons Teamsters at four warehouses were courageously continuing their solidarity strike, despite the top Teamsters officials' back-to-work directive. This battle for justice against the food industry giants can be won, but only by expanding the struggle, not contracting it. *Nation* readers can check the Teamsters for a Democratic Union website (www.tdu.org) for more on this issue.

FRANK HALSTEAD, *steward*
Ralphs/Kroger Teamsters Local #572

VENOM, BLARNEY & TWADDLE

Wakefield, RI

■ It's surprising to see a critic like Terry Eagleton repeat the tired saw that poetry has stopped mattering, that it is now a trivial hobby pursued by those without the guts to confront public concerns ["Mystic Poet," Dec. 8]. Considering that when a fact is constantly denied there must be something to it, we should ask ourselves why so many intellectuals and pundits need to deny that poetry is important. In this case, that denial must arise from a literary theorist's disappointment that more people read poetry than his theories.

Meanwhile, poetry is indispensable to a not inconsiderable percentage of the literate public, including those who circulate opinions about public policy and make laws to implement their views. I have many novelist friends; they all read poetry. Many journalists read novelists and poets. Many legislators and other elected officials read journalists and novelists. It's not possible to place an automatic, verifiable limit on the eventual reach or influence of a feeling or idea that first surfaced in a poem.

Does Eagleton believe that the poets of the Black Arts movement in America had no instigative effect on African-Americans' struggle for civil equality and autonomy in the 1960s? Does he really doubt that Ginsberg's poetry was influential in mobilizing antiwar activism during the Vietnam era? Does he forget the role that the poetry of Sylvia Plath and Adrienne Rich played in awakening women's consciousness to the fact of their secondary position in contem-

porary society? Does he assume that poets like Ginsberg, Rich and Audre Lorde had nothing to do with the development of gay liberation in America? Has he not heard about the remarkable resurgence of an antiwar movement in America over the past year, one associated with Sam Hamill's Poets Against War initiative? If so, he ought to reconsider the cultural and political history of the past forty years. It will be a better use of his time than reading and reviewing a biography of a politically conservative poet like Yeats, whose views had such a dampening effect after his death even over here in America.

ALFRED CORN

Somerville, Mass.

■ How very unworthy of *The Nation* to publish Terry Eagleton's venomous character assassination masquerading as a review of Roy Foster's biography of Yeats, the most scurrilous piece of blarney being Eagleton's assertion that Foster is "an offspring of Protestant Anglo-Ireland." Nothing could be further from the truth. Foster is indeed both Protestant and Irish but cannot be considered Anglo-Irish. The distinction is significant. Eagleton is a prominent English academic of Irish descent who lives in Ireland and must understand the issues of class involved, so one can only assume that he's being contemptuous. But this is not the first time that Eagleton has employed this tired canard in relation to Foster.

Another blatant lie is that Foster is on record as having derided "commemorating the dead of the Great Famine." Twaddle. Foster is on record as having said that it is impossible, given the distance of time, to recapture the trauma of the Great Famine, unlike, for example, that of the Holocaust, which exists in living memory. Also, he is on record as having been critical of the exploitative theme-park aspects of the current Irish renaissance, such as the interpretive centers in the new museums that now dot the country. Eagleton's dislike of Foster, as he has clearly stated in other diatribes, is based on his conviction that the historian is prejudiced against Irish nationalism and a toady to the English establishment, telling the "chattering masses" what they want to hear about Irish history. How Eagleton must have jumped for joy when handed the opportunity to trash Foster to a fresh audience on this side of the Atlantic.

JOHN MCSWEENEY

EAGLETON REPLIES

Bellarena, N. Ireland

■ To call Roy Foster a member of Protestant Anglo-Ireland is not to suggest that he is descended from landed gentry, which is only one meaning of "Anglo-Irish." The dominant class in colonial Ireland included middle-class members too. As for the Famine dead, the official commemoration of them in Ireland is the

Famine Museum, which Roy Foster is as supercilious about in his book *The Irish Story* as he is about every other Famine memorial.

I am indeed a critic of Foster's work. But he has received such lavish praise that a spot of criticism can surely be accommodated. As far as the praise goes, he has been described as "one of the most distinguished heirs of the great tradition of Anglo-Irish liberalism." He has been lauded for his "supple, civilised intelligence," canonized as our leading Irish historian and admired for his "genius." His work has been commended as "erudite and illuminating," marked by "wit, insight and coruscating intelligence." His Yeats biography has been called "one of the mightiest biographies of our age...splendidly stylish...grippingly readable and intellectually rich."

Who showered him with all this praise? Why, me, actually. Has John McSweeney really not noticed, or does it just suit him to keep quiet about it?

TERRY EAGLETON

TWO CORRECTIONS

Newton, Mass.

■ I was obviously pleased by Eric Alterman's recent reference to my book as "his superb new study, *Averting 'The Final Failure': John F. Kennedy and the Secret Cuban Missile Crisis Meetings*" ["Exchange," Jan. 26]. However, I would like to make two corrections. First: I was the historian at the Kennedy Library, not the chief archivist. Second: I agree that the Miller Center/Norton edition of the missile crisis transcripts is "far more accurate" than the 1997 Harvard Press version. Nonetheless, scholars should consult my review "The JFK Tapes: Round Two," in *Reviews in American History*, December 2002, pp. 680–688 and the Appendix in my book, "The Published Cuban Missile Crisis Transcripts: Rounds One, Two and Beyond," pp. 427–440, to learn that the new edition is still not nearly as reliable as it could and should have been.

SHELDON M. STERN

SENATOR PAUL SIMON

Los Angeles

■ I notice a common thread running through all the reminiscences about Senator Paul Simon, who died December 9 ["In Fact..." Dec. 29]. All who met him were struck by his love of humanity and his belief that the proper role of government and the political process was to better the lives of all in our society.

Having had the honor and pleasure to work in Paul's (he was on a first-name basis with everyone) Senate press office in 1987 on an internship, I was impressed by his down-to-earth nature and the strength of his convictions. I was living in South West DC not too far

(Continued on Page 22)

IN THIS ISSUE

2 LETTERS

EDITORIALS & COMMENT

3 BUSH'S STUMP SPEECH

4 ELECTION MATTERS

The Iowa Surprise
John Nichols

5 PAUL O'NEILL, TRUTH-TELLER

William Greider

6 THE ONCE-GREEN GOP

Mark Hertsgaard

COLUMNS

7 DEADLINE POET

On Paul O'Neill's Revelation...
Calvin Trillin

9 BEAT THE DEVIL

The Fog of Cop-Out
Alexander Cockburn

10 DIARY OF A MAD LAW PROFESSOR

Memo From Mars
Patricia J. Williams

ARTICLES

11 THE NEW AMERICAN CENTURY

A call to global activists meeting in India.
Arundhati Roy

14 TAKE BACK VALUES

Democrats must talk about social morality.
David Callahan

18 FREE MARTHA!

Doug Henwood

19 ORANGE ALERT CITIZEN

DEBRIEFING FORM
Bruce McCall

20 WORKING AND POOR IN THE USA

Beth Shulman

BOOKS & THE ARTS

23 MACCABE: Godard: A Portrait of the

Artist at Seventy
David Thomson

26 PASOLINI: Stories From the City of God:

Sketches and Chronicles of Rome,
1950-1966
George Scialabba

30 KURLANSKY: 1968: The Year That

Rocked the World
Robin Blackburn

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EDITORIALS

Bush's Stump Speech

George W. Bush's State of the Union speech clearly signaled that he plans to run as a wartime, prosperity candidate. By setting the agenda this way, he is trying to force the Democrats to argue why one of them would make a better Commander in Chief and would be better at keeping a vibrant economy going.

To defend this program, Bush once again had to distort it, presenting the pre-emptive invasion of Iraq as a global coalition effort to enforce UN sanctions. He trotted out the mythic threat of Iraqi weapons of mass destruction, except now reality tempered the lie. Gone was the nuclear capacity that threatened mushroom clouds over New York; now Iraq's danger was that it had "weapons of mass destruction-related program activities and significant amounts of [concealed] equipment"—not quite on a par with last year's warnings of imminent Armageddon. Explaining why the "war on terrorism" must continue, he conflated terrorist attacks in Bali, Jakarta and elsewhere with the conflict in Iraq—although all evidence suggests that Saddam Hussein, while a brutal dictator, maintained no working relationship with Al Qaeda. In one of the rare moments during the speech when reason prevailed in the chamber, a small round of applause broke out when Bush said—as a prelude to calling for their renewal—that "key provisions of the Patriot Act are set to expire next year."

On the domestic side, Bush proposes to take his already extreme policies even further, with permanent tax cuts for the wealthy placing a straitjacket on the budget and making any real domestic initiatives impossible. To give the appearance of caring about soaring healthcare costs, he again urged tax deductions for healthcare expenses and vowed to defend his prescription-drug bill. But that plan, a shameless payoff to drug companies, actually

prohibits Medicare from negotiating a better price for seniors. The result, as Consumers Union reports, is that seniors will pay more for their drugs.

Bush hailed his education reforms and spoke compellingly about educating every child. In fact, he has been blasted by educators across the country for shackling school systems with arbitrary tests and standards and shortchanging schools on funds. As part of his empty "Jobs for the 21st Century" label, the President promised more money for community colleges, the very institutions taking it on the chin from the state fiscal crises on which he has turned his back.

Most remarkable, Bush celebrated the economy, claiming that permanent tax cuts will create more jobs and that his budget will "cut the deficit in half over the next five years." The truth is that as many as 3 million jobs have been lost since Bush took office, and according to the Center on Budget and Policy Priorities, Bush's budget claims are "essentially an accounting fiction," with the true deficit calculated to rise from \$374 billion last year to \$500 billion in 2009.

Bush's final remarks were clearly calculated to appeal to his conservative base. Calling for doubling federal funding for abstinence education and for passing laws that would lead to greater funding of religious groups providing social services, he saved his strongest, though carefully hedged, comments for gay marriage. Eschewing the "g"-word and including a vague call to respect individual dignity, Bush nonetheless gave his religious-right supporters what they crave, signaling that he would support a constitutional amendment defining marriage as between a man and a woman.

Although the speech was intended to highlight the President's "homeland" concerns, his domestic menu suffered in comparison with the heated rhetoric dished up on war. Bush will gesture on schools, jobs and healthcare, but he'll run as a wartime President,

COMMENT

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wrapped in the flag, invoking the courage of our soldiers, scorning his opponents as unwilling to stand the test. High-end tax cuts and pre-emptive war remain this President's platform. The rest is packaging. And this fall, Americans will decide whether to stay that reckless course.

For more on the State of the Union address—including a "Capital Games" column by David Corn and an analysis by Eric Laursen of Bush initiatives that would eliminate much, if not most, taxation on savings and investment and aim the tax collector's net at workers' wages—go to www.thenation.com.

COMMENT

The Iowa Surprise

ELECTION
MATTERS

Everything about Howard Dean's "Iowa Perfect Storm" strategy seemed to go perfectly, right up to the point at which Iowans actually started voting in the first-in-the-nation caucuses that began the process of selecting the Democratic nominee for President. As the results started pouring in, one Dean aide noted with cryptic accuracy that in *The Perfect Storm* of book and movie fame, from which the Dean camp had borrowed its campaign-closing metaphor, the hero did not survive.

It wasn't quite that bad; Dean did beat Dick Gephardt for one of the three coveted exit tickets from Iowa. But the former Vermont governor, who barely a week earlier had topped polls of prospective caucus-goers, finished far behind a pair of US senators whom he had dismissed as hopelessly weighed down by their Washington "insider" status—John Kerry of Massachusetts and John Edwards of North Carolina. While Gephardt's support collapsed, despite massive help from industrial unions, Dean held on to his hyperenthusiastic base to win 18 percent of the Iowa vote. Unfortunately for Dean, his supposedly superior organization failed to attract many votes beyond that base. Kerry and Edwards divided the undecided voters and those who were jumping off the sinking Gephardt ship, pumping their totals up to 38 percent for Kerry and 32 percent for Edwards. And while the number of caucus-goers doubled from 2000, when Al Gore and Bill Bradley faced off, Kerry and Edwards benefited more than Dean from the expanded pool of potential supporters. Even in liberal Johnson County, home of the University of Iowa and a hotbed of antiwar sentiment, Kerry, who voted for the 2002 resolution that allowed George W. Bush to send troops to Iraq, easily beat Dean. Edwards, who also voted for the resolution, came within two points of beating him too. Across the state, Edwards benefited from a pact with peace candidate Dennis Kucinich, who urged his backers, in precincts where they lacked enough support to win delegates, to caucus with the North Carolinian, who had taken up some of Kucinich's populist economic themes.

So what happened to Dean? As he stumbled in debates and bungled policy pronouncements, the presumed front-runner took hits from all sides—including some of the roughest media coverage accorded a candidate since George McGovern got the "liberal

EDITORIALS

loser" treatment in 1972. Yet, Dean poured time and money into targeting the hapless Gephardt rather than addressing the growing concern among Iowans about his chances in a November race with Bush. Dean was the original "Beat Bush" candidate, but Kerry and Edwards radically altered their campaigns to present themselves as stronger applicants for the title. While doing a reasonably good job of maintaining their senatorial demeanors, both Kerry and Edwards ditched tepid stump speeches for addresses that were thick with the populist appeals that Dean had initiated.

Kerry said on caucus night that Iowa had made him a better candidate, and he was right. But it would be more precise to say that his most-hyped opponent made him a better candidate. The once stiff-as-a-board senator began bounding out of helicopters in small-town Iowa and asking startled Democrats to "join me in fighting for an America where the people are in charge," sounding like no one so much as Howard Dean. The same went for his discussion of issues of war and peace. He still talked about his record as a Vietnam veteran, but now he talked almost as much about his record as an anti-Vietnam War protester, and he updated the appeal by reminding everyone that he had voted against allocating another \$87 billion to Bush's Iraq misadventure. Among the 75 percent of caucus-goers who told exit pollsters that they opposed the war, Kerry, not Dean, emerged as the first choice.

Edwards's transformation was even more dramatic. The millionaire trial lawyer scrapped his feel-good stump speech and hit the trail with a rap that combined Dean's passion and Gephardt's pro-worker populism. Condemning Bush for creating "two Americas"—a sort of nirvana for the rich versus a hell of lost manufacturing jobs and failed farms for the rest—Edwards conveniently glossed over his mixed record on free trade and agribusiness to present himself as a William Jennings Bryan, or at least a Hubert Humphrey, for the twenty-first century. He even fuzzed his stance on Iraq by railing against "war profiteering" on the part of companies that had contributed to the Bush campaign.

Does his loss in Iowa mean that Dean is done? Not necessarily. Dean still has a lot of money in the bank and solid bases of activist support in the forty-nine states that have yet to begin selecting delegates. Iowa does not have to be definitional: New Englander Michael Dukakis finished third there in 1988, and Bill Clinton finished fourth in 1992, and both men went on to win Democratic nominations with relative ease. Dean can take heart from the fact that the race is not over, just more unsettled. And, as voters in New Hampshire and South Carolina prepare to go to the polls, it could get even more unsettled. Kerry and Edwards cannot capitalize fully on their Iowa showings because they must immediately begin to compete for attention and votes with Dean's still viable campaign and with the wild-card candidacy of Wesley Clark, who skipped Iowa but is surging in New Hampshire. Outside the Iowa limelight, Clark has been cobbling together an ideologically eclectic campaign that has secured support both from Clintonites like Rahm Emanuel and progressive icons like George McGovern and filmmaker Michael Moore.

Dean, who more than anyone else has framed the contest for the 2004 Democratic nomination, must now recognize that he is no longer unique: Kerry, Edwards and Clark have stolen his themes and approaches and buffed them up in what appears to many

Democrats to be a more electorally appealing form—just as Clinton stole Paul Tsongas's anti-deficit rap after Tsongas beat him in New Hampshire in 1992. Dean must either grab the grail back, or resign himself, as Tsongas did, to the fate of the contender who defines his race but does not win it.

JOHN NICHOLS

Paul O'Neill, Truth-Teller

For those with a taste for learning the inner truth about White House politics, reading Paul O'Neill's story is like eating a bowl of peanuts—difficult to stop. For those who have always seen a fraudulent character in George W. Bush, it is like cashews. The news coverage has mined *The Price of Loyalty* by Ron Suskind for many extraordinary "gotcha" nuggets, but the cruelest revelation is in the texture of this narrative—a devastating portrait of our imperial President. Up close, he is smaller than life, an oddly uninteresting person. Yet he possesses all of the presidency's dreadful powers and cheerfully authorizes their use. The publicity apparatus successfully created a guy who is Mr. Macho Fighter Pilot. Behind the closed door, he submits complacently to the close supervision of others—Cheney, Rice, Rove et al.

The book is deeply scary on that level. That's why the Bush henchmen have piled on O'Neill with such fierce denials and personal attacks. Even GWB felt the need to speak out against its message. They understand how damaging this book is to the concocted persona they sold the American people—and therefore how it threatens their agenda. O'Neill is one of them (or was until they booted him as Treasury Secretary). He's a meticulous man, strong-willed and experienced in government and corporate life, a conservative Republican with a talent for systems analysis. Yet he comes across as the innocent everyman, honest but slightly goofy in his naïveté, repeatedly shocked by the cynicism and sloppiness,

THE PICKERING PUTSCH

George W. Bush probably should have sent Mississippi's outer space jurist Charles Pickering to Mars but instead sent him to the Fifth Circuit Court of Appeals on a tricky "recess appointment." This was another thumb in the eye to Senate Democrats, since Pickering had been voted down by the Senate Judiciary Committee when Democrats were in the majority and not approved by the Senate last year because of severe ethics problems and segregationist views in the 1960s. The Pickering appointment clearly circumvented the will of the Senate and mocked the Constitution's advise and consent clause. That Bush did this during the celebration of what would have been Martin Luther King Jr.'s 75th birthday was an extra twist of the dirty thumb. Pickering will now serve for a year, and there's nothing the Democrats can do about this parliamentary maneuver. As Ted Kennedy has often said regarding the current judicial wars, "President Bush would rather pick fights than pick judges."

COMMENT

angered by the gross deceptions and flaky decisions. O'Neill is believable because his own story portrays him as goat, not hero.

"Condi, what are we going to talk about today? What's on the agenda?" the Commander in Chief asks, convening one of his earliest National Security Council meetings. Regime change in Iraq, Mr. President. CIA Director George Tenet rolls out a large, grainy aerial photograph of an Iraqi factory. What's that? "A plant that produces either chemical or biological materials for weapons manufacture," Tenet reports. Bush and Cabinet officers hover over the picture, nodding. O'Neill, an old factory man himself as former CEO of Alcoa, looks at the photo and remarks, "I've seen a lot of factories around the world that look a lot like this one."

Tenet mentions circumstantial evidence. The President hands out assignments—Rumsfeld and Shelton at the Pentagon "should examine our military options." O'Neill explained later and Suskind reported, "The meeting had seemed scripted. Rumsfeld had said little, Cheney nothing at all, though both men had long entertained the idea of overthrowing Saddam. Rice orchestrated, and Tenet had a presentation ready. [Secretary of State] Powell seemed surprised." O'Neill's insider history contains no "smoking gun" in the Watergate tradition but is somewhat more convincing than the heroic version told by Bob Woodward in *Bush at War*.

On nearly every page, the reader gets a clear understanding of why O'Neill was shown the door late in 2002. It was not that he occasionally made off-the-wall remarks in public but that he made them in private too. His behavior was more than obnoxious. He offended the concept of the modern presidency, in which propaganda is policy and everyone in the room understands what O'Neill could never grasp—that propaganda comes before all else.

This division of labor did not start with Bush II, of course, but the Bushies have perfected hermetic secrecy and the cynical manufacture of mass deception, taking it to a level that might make Nixon or Reagan blush. More than a generation ago, truth-telling had its historical moments—the shocking revelations

surrounding Vietnam, Watergate, the CIA's assassinations and domestic spying—and for a time the imperial President shrank to human-scale fallibility. This did not last. In our media-drenched age, Americans know less of reality than they once did. Even worse, many accept the artificial presidency and judge the man mainly on the quality of his performance.

The man behind the curtain is not a wizard, not even an impressive mortal. Bush does not work tirelessly, dawn to dusk, to improve the Republic. He doesn't even read newspapers or, as O'Neill noticed, ask challenging questions. He gets on airplanes and flies around the country for fundraising and political stunts. Twenty-plus years ago, I participated in a similar moment of truth-telling with a lengthy magazine article ("The Education of David Stockman") in which Ronald Reagan's brainy young budget director disclosed the utter chaos and error behind Reaganomics. The Gipper's tax-cutting triumph was a fiscal mess that would take twenty years to clean up with a series of major tax increases—started by Reagan himself.

Like O'Neill, Stockman shocked Washington by violating its code of *omertà*. He told the actual inside truth about public affairs. It's OK to write a tell-all memoir revealing presidential lapses and indecision, but you are supposed to wait until after the man leaves office. When Stockman committed the sin of premature truth-telling, he was still in government himself. Many loyal Reaganauts cried out for a public lynching. Reagan's wise advisers knew that the devastating facts were indeed accurate but would soon pass if they arranged a bit of convincing theater.

Stockman went to the Oval Office for apologies, and the encounter was portrayed as "a trip to the woodshed." Never happened, Stockman revealed years later. Reagan was, on the contrary, surprisingly meek and sympathetic. The mythological Gipper continued in office triumphantly. And so did the monster budget deficits Stockman had predicted "as far as the eye can see." When Paul O'Neill disappears from the headlines, will people remember that he spoke the truth?

WILLIAM GREIDER

NATION NOTES

Readers consistently rate the environment as one of their greatest concerns. In an effort to give the subject the attention it deserves, we have asked Mark Hertsgaard to establish an Environment Department, which makes its first appearance on the masthead this week. Hertsgaard has been covering the environment, and writing for *The Nation*, for more than twenty years and is the author of the highly regarded *Earth Odyssey: Around the World in Search of Our Environmental Future*. Indicating a range of interests that he intends to pursue in his work for the magazine, his other books include *On Bended Knee: The Press and the Reagan Presidency* and, most recently, *The Eagle's Shadow: Why America Fascinates and Infuriates the World*. He's a frequent contributor to leading newspapers and magazines here and abroad, and the political correspondent for Link TV, a new national satellite channel.

The Once-Green GOP

The environment is probably the single issue on which Republicans in general—and President Bush in particular—are most vulnerable." So asserted Frank Luntz, a leading Republican pollster, last year in a confidential memo that surfaced in the *New York Times*. One wonders whether White House political guru Karl Rove agrees with Luntz's assessment, given the Bush Administration's relentless assault on clear skies and healthy forests on behalf of its corporate backers. But as former Treasury Secretary Paul O'Neill's recent truth-telling reminds us, there are also honorable Republicans out there who are appalled by the arrogant, dishonest extremism of the Bush crowd, which they see as a betrayal of real conservatism. On the environment, it's worth remembering that it was Republicans who led the federal government into the modern environmental era, when Richard Nixon created the Environmental Protection Agency, signed into law the Clean Air and Clean Water acts (and much other fundamental legislation) and generally launched the nation on a

course of environmental protection that, despite recent backsliding, remains the envy of much of the world. Now, this oft-forgotten history has been described by a former Republican insider, Russell Train, in a book that offers implicit lessons to anyone hoping to exploit Bush's vulnerabilities on the environment in 2004.

Ignore the book's bland title—*Politics, Pollution, and Pandas*—and focus on the pedigree of the author. Train was one of Nixon's two point men on the environment. He served as the first chairman of the Council on Environmental Quality from 1970 until 1973, when he replaced William Ruckelshaus (Nixon's other eco point man) as administrator of the EPA, which he headed until Democrat Jimmy Carter took office in 1977. Although Train's book is primarily a memoir of his years in government, he is clearly pained by the current President's environmental policies, which he regards as willfully obtuse, not to mention an invitation to global catastrophe.

Train's genteel but plain-spoken criticisms of Bush sting not only because of the author's career history and political affiliation but his personal background. A New England blue-blood whose father was President Herbert Hoover's naval attaché and whose wife was a bridesmaid to Jackie Kennedy, Train is no wild-eyed tree hugger but an unimpeachable member of the governing class. On visits to New York City, he would spend the night in Laurance Rockefeller's apartment; the Trains traveled in China with the senior Bushes and were guests at the White House on the night after the first Gulf War began in 1991.

To read Train's memoirs is to be reminded that Republicans once championed environmental progress rather than destruction. Before Nixon came to power in 1969, there were virtually no federal laws against pollution; factory smokestacks, auto tailpipes and chemical outflows spewed all manner of poisons into the air, soil and water. Train's account of how he and his Administration colleagues, working with Democrats in Congress, established the laws, regulations and institutions that now control such antisocial activities (however imperfectly) is a powerful testament to the ideal of activist government and the good it can accomplish. Nixon was certainly probusiness, but unlike today's Republicans he was not antigovernment. He knew the market wasn't always right and that government oversight was needed to keep business honest.

Thanks to Train's insider status, the book also contains tidbits certain to delight anyone still interested in the Nixon presidency. In one scene, Nixon is left speechless after his valet politely but pointedly corrects an ignorant presidential remark about tropical ecology. And who would have guessed that John Ehrlichman, the adviser best known for his villainous role in the Watergate scandal, was a closet green who time and again made sure the environmental agenda didn't get lost in White House power struggles or bureaucratic inertia?

Most relevant in this election year, however, is the book's theory about why Nixon pursued such pro-environmental policies. According to Train, Nixon believed he had no choice. From the time he took office in 1969 Nixon was thinking ahead to running for re-election in 1972, and the public's evident concern about the environment—as expressed in opinion polls, the first Earth Day celebration in 1970 and abundant news media coverage—led him to assume that he had to establish a strong record on the issue.

Nixon never expressed a personal interest in environmental issues, recalls Train; rather, he reacted as “a highly political animal... [whose] instincts told him that he and the Republican Party could not afford to be seen as anti-environment.”

Bush, on the other hand, seems to have concluded he can get away with a rape-and-pillage approach and still win a second term, and he may be right. Media coverage of his environmental record has been critical but low-key, activist criticisms have rarely gained traction and polls indicate that Americans, while they don't like what Bush is doing, don't rank the environment very high when it comes to deciding which way to vote.

So the Bush assault continues. Just since Thanksgiving, his Administration has, among other actions, proposed allowing electric utilities to delay fifteen more years before decreasing their emissions of mercury, a substance especially harmful to children and pregnant women; proposed opening Alaska's North Slope to oil drilling; driven three more senior EPA enforcement officials into early retirement with its antiregulatory attitude (enforcement is down 58 percent since the Clinton years); taken Greenpeace to court for mounting nonviolent protests against illegal logging; and, perhaps worst, continued to stall on the overriding threat of climate change, even as new studies warn of massive species extinctions and hundreds of thousands of human deaths by 2050.

Bush is apparently betting that the environmental movement is too weak, and the American electorate too ignorant or apathetic, to make him pay a price for these outrages come November. His opponents have ten months to prove him wrong. They might start by giving copies of Russell Train's book to every thoughtful Republican they know.

MARK HERTSGAARD

Mark Hertsgaard, *The Nation's* environment correspondent, is the author of five books, including, most recently, *The Eagle's Shadow: Why America Fascinates and Infuriates the World* (Farrar, Straus & Giroux).

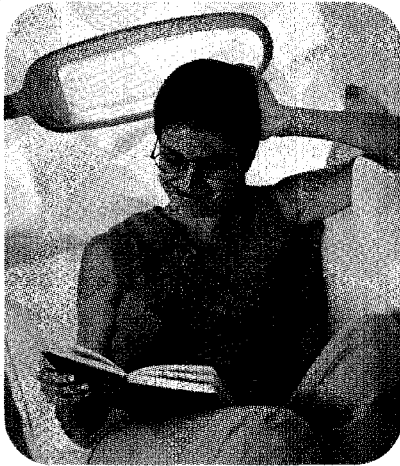
CALVIN TRILLIN

ON PAUL O'NEILL'S REVELATION THAT THE BUSHMEN WERE PLANNING A WAR WITH IRAQ FROM THE EARLIEST DAYS OF THE ADMINISTRATION

It now appears that they saw 9/11
As, even though not quite ordained in heaven
To punish godless sins allowed in bed
(As Falwell and Pat Robertson had said),
At least a blow that could be put to use—
Though tragic, sure, a heaven-sent excuse.

Turn any room in your home into a *sunroom*

Bring more than twice as much natural light into your home as any other lamp



How often have you sat down to read and found yourself asleep in no time? Well, give your tired eyes a break with help from the sun. Now it is possible to bring the advantages of the outdoor light *indoors*. When you think about it, there hasn't been a significant innovation in lighting since Thomas Edison invented the first light bulb.

By the 21st century, shouldn't there be better light? Now there is. A breakthrough technology using rare earth phosphors will change the way you read, work, do your hobbies and even the way you see yourself. The New UltraLux® Floor Lamp replicates the full light spectrum.

Why current light technology fails. An ordinary

incandescent bulb's light is concentrated on the orange-red part of the spectrum creating a dim yellowish light. The light from Fluorescent bulbs is concentrated on the yellow green portion of the spectrum giving your room a sickly greenish color.

Pure white light. The UltraLux® innovative difference is Full Spectrum lighting using all of the visible colors in sunlight. Full Spectrum light is made up of pure white light with an amazing color rendering index of 91 producing more contrast and a sharper view.

"How many times have you felt you just don't get enough light to read or do your work? Well, with the Ultralux floor lamp, my entire work suite lights up like sunlight with relaxing brightness for evening reading or daytime concentration. This quality light is a must for every home and office."

Laurence D. Martel, Ph.D., *President*
National Academy of Integrative Learning, Inc.

Complex hobbies and small type becomes easier to see and color matching is much more exact. The long neck of the floor lamp is flexible allowing you to point the light where it is most needed.

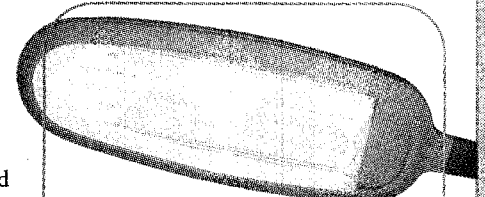
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- Improve concentration on schoolwork.
- Increase Vitamin D production in the skin, which lets the body efficiently use calcium
- Ease the winter blues.
- Reduce hyperactivity.
- Ease eyestrain.
- Render colors much more accurately for artists, knitters and needlepoint.
- Reduce levels of melatonin, a hormone that promotes fatigue.
- Improve neuron function in the brain.

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- Bulb has 10,000 hour life.

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ALEXANDER COCKBURN

The Fog of Cop-Out

My dear friend and late *Nation* colleague Andrew Kopkind liked to tell how, skiing in Aspen at the height of the Vietnam War, he came round a bend and saw another skier, Defense Secretary Robert McNamara, alone near the edge of a precipice. This was during the period of Rolling Thunder, which ultimately saw three times as many bombs dropped on Vietnam as the Allies dropped on Europe in the Second World War. "I could have reached out with my ski pole," Andy would say wistfully, "and pushed him over."

Alas, Andy missed this chance to get into the history books and McNamara survived the 1960s, when he contributed more than most to the slaughter of 3.4 million Vietnamese (his own estimate). He went on to run the World Bank, where he presided over the impoverishment, eviction from their lands and death of many millions more round the world. And now here he is, the star of Errol Morris's much-praised documentary *The Fog of War*, talking comfortably about the millions of people he's helped to kill. It reminded me of films of Albert Speer, Hitler's architect and then head of war production. Speer loved to admit to an overall guilt. But when he was pressed on specific nastiness, like working Jews or Russians to death in arms factories, he would insist, eyes ablaze with forthrightness, that he knew nothing of such infamies.

It's good to have a new generation reminded of history's broad outlines, like the firebombing of Japanese cities and Vietnam, but I don't think Morris laid a glove on McNamara, who should be feeling well pleased. Like Speer, he got away with it yet again.

The documentary's gimmickry—cuts to black, Morris shouting his questions away from the mike, McNamara off-center in the frame, montage of typewriter-ribbon wheels, skulls dropping in slow motion down a stairwell, captions offering banal "lessons"—gives us a clue. Morris didn't have much to throw at McNamara. He didn't do enough homework. Time and again, McNamara gets away with it, muffling himself in the ever-useful camouflage of the "fog of war," cowering in the shadow of baroque monsters like Curtis LeMay or LBJ, choking up about his choice of Kennedy's gravesite in Arlington, choking up at the memory of Johnson giving him the Medal of Freedom, spouting nonsense about how Kennedy would have pulled out of Vietnam.

When McNamara looks back down memory lane there are no real shadows, just the sunlight of moral self-satisfaction: "I don't fault Truman for dropping the bomb..."; "I never saw Kennedy more shocked" (after the murder of Ngo Dinh Diem); "never would I have authorized an illegal action" (after the Tonkin Gulf fakery); "I'm very proud of my accomplishments and I'm very sorry I made errors" (his life). Slabs of instructive history are missing from Morris's film. McNamara came in on one of the biggest of big lies, the bogus "missile gap." As Defense Secretary he ordered the production of 1,000 Minuteman nukes, this at a time when he was looking at US intelligence reports showing that the Soviets had one silo with one untested missile.

Reminiscing about his acceptance of Kennedy's invitation to

come from Ford in Detroit (much nonsense here) to Camelot, McNamara claims to Morris that he insisted he would not be part of Georgetown's pesky social round. Nonsense. He took to it like a parvenu to ermine, as more than one Washington hostess could glowingly recall.

"It's beyond the capacity of the human mind to comprehend all the variables," the systems analyst proclaims to Morris, which would have afforded a better-informed filmmaker a chance to ask this cold engine of statistical calculation for his take on the

prime business of the Pentagon, the allocation of pork. Why did Defense Secretary McNamara overrule all expert review and procurement recommendations and insist that General Dynamics rather than Boeing make the F-111? Could it be that Henry Crown of Chicago was calling in some chits for his role in fixing the 1960 JFK vote in Cook County, Illinois? Crown, of Chicago Sand and Gravel, had \$300 million of the mob's money in GD debentures, and after the disaster of the Convair, GD needed the F-111 to avoid going belly-up, taking the mob's \$300 million with it. McNamara misled Congressional investigators about this for years afterward.

The Gulf of Tonkin "attack" prompted the Gulf of Tonkin Resolution in 1964, whereby Congress gave LBJ legal authority to prosecute and escalate the war in Vietnam. McNamara does some fancy footwork here, stating that there wasn't any attack by North Vietnamese PT boats on the US destroyer Maddox on August 4, but that there had been such an attack on August 2. It shouldn't have been beyond Morris's powers to pull up an excellent piece by Robert Scheer, published in the *Los Angeles Times* in April 1985, establishing not only that the Maddox was attacked neither on August 2 nor 4 but that, beginning in July, South Vietnamese navy personnel, US-trained and -equipped, "had begun conducting secret raids on targets in North Vietnam." As Scheer said, the North Vietnamese PT boats that approached the Maddox on August 2 were probably responding to that assault.

The Six-Day War? Just before this '67 war the Israelis were ready to attack and knew they were going to win but couldn't get a clear go-ahead from the Johnson Administration. As the documentary *The 50 Years War* narrates, Meir Amit, head of Israel's Mossad, flew to Washington. The crucial OK came from McNamara, thus launching Israel's long-planned, aggressive war on Egypt, Jordan and Syria, which led to present disasters. And no, Morris didn't quiz McNamara on Israel's deliberate attack on the US ship *Liberty* during that war (with thirty-four US sailors dead and 174 wounded), or on the cover-up that McNamara supervised.

We have so many sponsors of mass murder hanging around, it would be nice to see one of them, once in a while, take a real pasting. But no, they live on into happy old age, vivid in their worries about the human condition, writing in *The New York Review of Books*, passing on no honest records about the evil it really takes to run an empire. So suddenly people are shocked about a relative piker like George W. Bush and start talking about Hitler. If only they knew. It's not that hard to find out. ■



BEAT THE
DEVIL

PATRICIA J. WILLIAMS

Memo From Mars

Dear Beeblebrox,

Am having a little trouble with my update for *The Hitchhiker's Guide to the Galaxy*. It's the noisy green planet again. Can't make head nor tails of it. I seek advice about how to interpret the data. First of all, our status as tourists has changed. Remember how they used to send scouts out into the desert to greet us when we landed? Time was when they'd roll out the red carpet and treat us as gods. Then there was the amusing little period when they tracked us with laser guns and tin foil suits for fear of space invaders. Well, these days you can't get a decent mention in the tabloids, they're all so busy chasing one another—perhaps it's something in the water, but the Earthlings have all become aliens to each other.

This doesn't mean it's any easier for us to blend in. As you recommended, I tied a cloth round my head this time, so as to cover the points of my ears—who can forget what a riot they caused last time! But in a recent eon, they evolved. Now pointy ears and heads are commonplace. Instead, it was the head cloth itself that caused the riot. They seemed to think my scarf was alive and that it was preaching religion and chatting them up about politics. I don't understand entirely, but my guess is that head coverings are kind of like the team flags we had such trouble understanding a few years ago. We really must do a closer study of the Hidden Language of Textiles.

I also donned what used to be the median recommended body covering, but there is no median anymore. On one side of the planet they cover most every part of themselves before entering the public space. On the other side of the planet they take most everything off. And in the land of France they are proposing to measure beards to make sure they're not too long—long beards confuse their gods. In the mountain strongholds of the Taliban they measure to insure they're not too short—short beards attract demons.

We also need to update the *Hitchhiker* glossary. May want to reconsider what they mean by that word "freedom." Remember how I used to wonder as I wandered where the buffalo roamed? When I visited the land they call "free" this time, I needed a visa to get in and a lawyer to get out. And I was lucky—they're sending anyone they can't categorize to a worm hole in the ozone just south of the Bermuda Triangle. No one seems to know what happens there, but I think the force field is pitching them out of Earth time altogether. I'd take another look at that mysterious Guantanamoonian Star Ship you said you encountered out by the edge of the universe. Could be a serious violation of the Universal Law.

Anyway, I tried to get them to take me to their leader. First I went to the land of Ur, where we had such good eats in the olden days, but it is a very confusing place just now. The people are at war with their liberators (check meaning of *liberation*); there is a Council of Governors that has no power (check meaning of *government*); there is a shared religion with a hundred heads (check meaning of *monotheism*); and there is a call for elec-

DIARY OF A MAD LAW PROFESSOR

tions that is being resisted by those who say they are holding out for democracy (check meaning of *democracy*).

Everyone told me that the true leader dwelt in the lands to the west, so there I steered my craft. I ended up in the land of Iowa, a flat patch of turf that makes a lovely landing site, for future reference. Iowa is also home to the 120,000 anointed voters who decide who will be the next leader of the planet. (Not sure how or why they are so anointed, must research.) But it is to this place that all the applicants for high

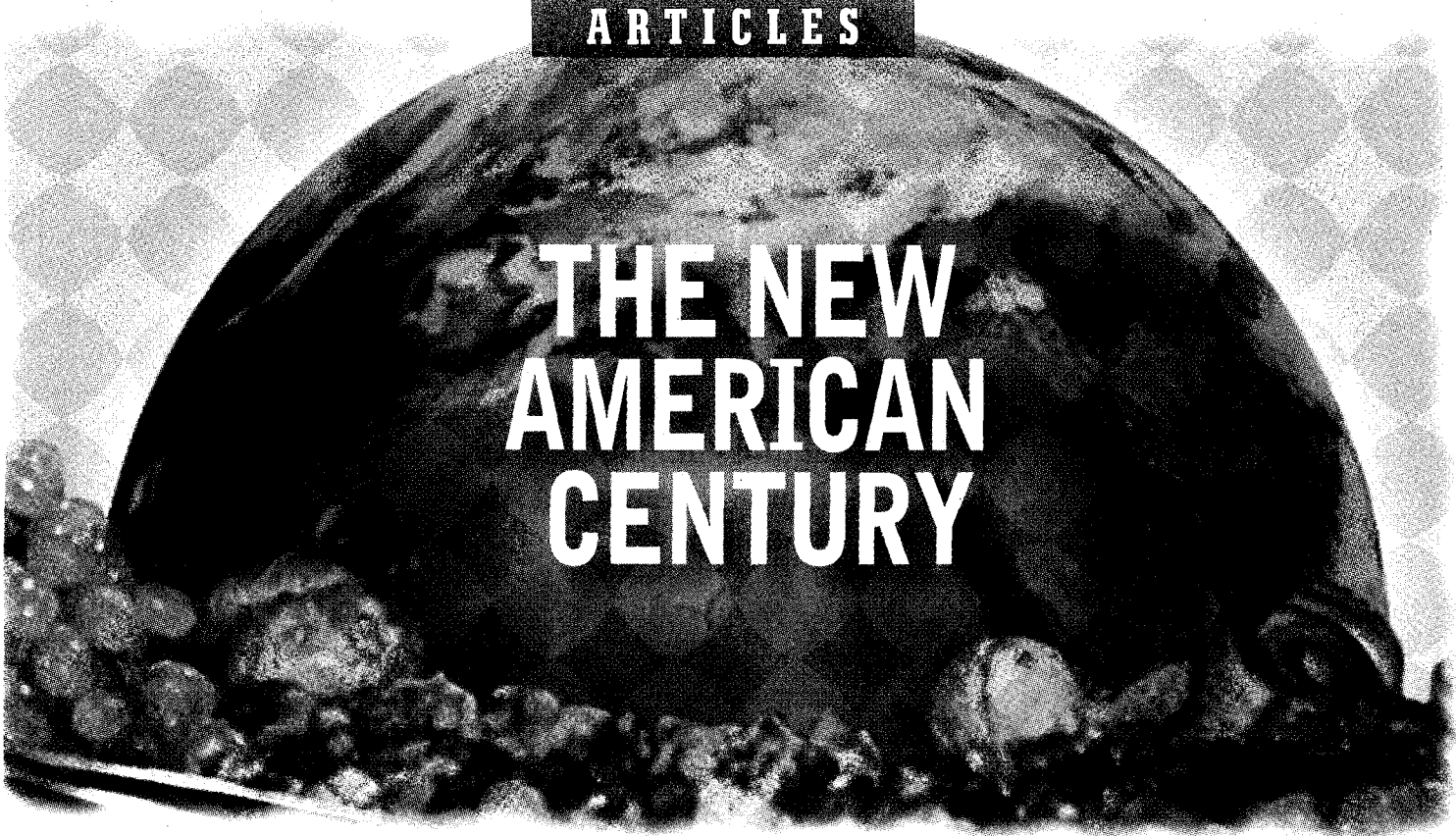
office come to pay their obeisance. They puff out their chests and rustle their tail feathers like the Greater Vassillian Intergalactic Bird of Prey in heat. They have eating contests and drinking contests and smiling contests and who-can-sweat-least-under-a-hot-light contests. They pound their fists and sing songs and yodel and yell. (If they lose, however, they must stop yelling and yodeling at once. Sometimes they forget.)

But even in Iowa I found no clear leader. Go east a bit they said, and so my next stop was the land of New Hampshire, where an even smaller group of really, really anointed voters gets to winnow the field yet further. These high priests of the ballot box dwell in snow caverns most of their lives, hibernating quietly until they hear the frenzied calls of the gathering, now-desperate candidates. The voting New Hampshireites then come forth from their frozen retreats and make themselves visible to the naked eye. There is more flap-dancing, more canoodling, and everyone eats enough to last them until the next thaw four years thence.

But still no leader was apparent. My final stop was in the land of Dixie, which seems to have slid northward just a bit in recent years. Everyone south of the Great Freshwater Lakes was speaking as though they were in more southerly climes, where everyone knows that little bits of words come unglued more easily in the humidity. But it's happening all over the snow belt now, the endin's just fallin' off like 'taters off a truck, and so I'm bundlin' up a big basket of g's I found lyin' lost on the ground and sendin' 'em to you for immediate observation and analysis.

In the meantime, though, I think I finally found their leader. Haven't been able to get him in focus yet—fuzzy, shifting, surface with frequent windstorms—but if I'm not mistaken, I do believe he is in possession of a new, improved model of the Arcturian Pentatrillium Improbability Drive, the one that materializes olive branches out of landmines and money when it has all been spent and victory where there is chaos and safety wherever almanacs are confiscated. At least let's hope he has it, because Earthlings are going to be plenty hotted up if he doesn't deliver all that visionary money and victorious order he keeps promising. If all he's really got to count on is old-fashioned probability, then I expect he'll soon turn to old-fashioned Martian Escapizoidalism like every other leader of a small world. That should keep him in orbit for at least a little while, but if it looks like the Earthlings might actually deposit him here—can we say...we'll talk? ■

ARTICLES



THE NEW AMERICAN CENTURY

In January 2003 thousands of us from across the world gathered in Porto Alegre in Brazil and declared—reiterated—that “Another World Is Possible.” A few thousand miles north, in Washington, George W. Bush and his aides were thinking the same thing.

Our project was the World Social Forum. Theirs—to further what many call the Project for the New American Century.

In the great cities of Europe and America, where a few years ago these things would only have been whispered, now people are openly talking about the good side of imperialism and the need for a strong empire to police an unruly world. The new missionaries want order at the cost of justice. Discipline at the cost of dignity. And ascendancy at any price. Occasionally some of us are invited to “debate” the issue on “neutral” platforms provided by the corporate media. Debating imperialism is a bit like debating the pros and cons of rape. What can we say? That we really miss it?

In any case, New Imperialism is already upon us. It’s a remodeled, streamlined version of what we once knew. For the first time in history, a single empire with an arsenal of weapons that could obliterate the world in an afternoon has complete, unipolar, economic and military hegemony. It uses different weapons to break open different markets. There isn’t a country on God’s earth that is not caught in the cross-hairs of the American cruise missile and the IMF checkbook. Argentina’s the model if you want to be the poster boy of neoliberal capitalism, Iraq if you’re the black sheep. Poor countries that are geopolitically of strategic value to Empire, or have a “market” of any size, or infrastructure that can be privatized, or, God forbid, natural resources of value—oil, gold, diamonds, cobalt, coal—must do as they’re told or become military targets. Those with the greatest reserves of natural

wealth are most at risk. Unless they surrender their resources willingly to the corporate machine, civil unrest will be fomented or war will be waged.

In this new age of empire, when nothing is as it appears to be, executives of concerned companies are allowed to influence foreign policy decisions. The Center for Public Integrity in Washington found that at least nine out of the thirty members of the Bush Administration’s Defense Policy Board were connected to companies that were awarded military contracts for \$76 billion between 2001 and 2002. George Shultz, former Secretary of State, was chairman of the Committee for the Liberation of Iraq. He is also on the board of directors of the Bechtel Group.

When asked about a conflict of interest in the case of war in Iraq he said, “I don’t know that Bechtel would particularly benefit from it. But if there’s work to be done, Bechtel is the type of company that could do it. But nobody looks at it as something you benefit from.” In April 2003, Bechtel signed a \$680 million contract for reconstruction.

This brutal blueprint has been used over and over again across Latin America, in Africa and in Central and Southeast Asia. It has cost millions of lives. It goes without saying that every war Empire wages becomes a Just War. This, in large part, is due to the role of the corporate media. It’s important to understand that the corporate media don’t just support the neoliberal project. They *are* the neoliberal project. This is not a moral position they have chosen to take; it’s structural. It’s intrinsic to the economics of how the mass media work.

Most nations have adequately hideous family secrets. So it isn’t often necessary for the media to lie. It’s all in the editing—what’s emphasized and what’s ignored. Say, for example, India was chosen as the target for a righteous war. The fact that about 80,000

by
ARUNDHATI ROY

people have been killed in Kashmir since 1989, most of them Muslim, most of them by Indian security forces (making the average death toll about 6,000 a year); the fact that in February and March of 2002 more than 2,000 Muslims were murdered on the streets of Gujarat, that women were gang-raped and children were burned alive and 150,000 driven from their homes while the police and administration watched and sometimes actively participated; the fact that no one has been punished for these crimes and the government that oversaw them was re-elected...all of this would make perfect headlines in international newspapers in the run-up to war.

Next thing we know, our cities will be leveled by cruise missiles, our villages fenced in with razor wire, US soldiers will patrol our streets, and Narendra Modi, Pravin Togadia or any of our popular bigots will, like Saddam Hussein, be in US custody having their hair checked for lice and the fillings in their teeth examined on prime-time TV.

But as long as our "markets" are open, as long as corporations like Enron, Bechtel, Halliburton and Arthur Andersen are given a free hand to take over our infrastructure and take away our jobs, our "democratically elected" leaders can fearlessly blur the lines between democracy, majoritarianism and fascism.

Our government's craven willingness to abandon India's proud tradition of being non-aligned, its rush to fight its way to the head of the queue of the Completely Aligned (the fashionable phrase is "natural ally"—India, Israel and the United States are "natural allies"), has given it the leg room to turn into a repressive regime without compromising its legitimacy.

A government's victims are not only those it kills and imprisons. Those who are displaced and dispossessed and sentenced to a lifetime of starvation and deprivation must count among them too. Millions of people have been dispossessed by "development" projects. In the past fifty-five years, big dams alone have displaced between 33 million and 55 million in India. They have no recourse to justice. In the past two years there have been a series of incidents in which police have opened fire on peaceful protesters, most of them Adivasi and Dalit. When it comes to the poor, and in particular Dalit and Adivasi communities, they get killed for encroaching on forest land, and killed when they're trying to protect forest land from encroachments—by dams, mines, steel plants and other "development" projects. In almost every instance in which the police opened fire, the government's strategy has been to say the firing was provoked by an act of violence. Those who have been fired upon are immediately called militants.

Across the country, thousands of innocent people, including minors, have been arrested under the Prevention of Terrorism Act and are being held in jail indefinitely and without trial. In the era

of the War against Terror, poverty is being slyly conflated with terrorism. In the era of corporate globalization, poverty is a crime. Protesting against further impoverishment is terrorism. And now our Supreme Court says that going on strike is a crime. Criticizing the court is a crime too, of course. They're sealing the exits.

Like Old Imperialism, New Imperialism relies for its success on a network of agents—corrupt local elites who service Empire. We all know the sordid story of Enron in India. The then-Maharashtra government signed a power purchase agreement that gave Enron profits that amounted to 60 percent of India's entire rural development budget. A single American company was guaranteed a profit equivalent to funds for infrastructural development for about 500 million people!

Unlike in the old days, the New Imperialist doesn't need to trudge around the tropics risking malaria or diarrhea or early death. New Imperialism can be conducted on e-mail. The vulgar,

hands-on racism of Old Imperialism is outdated. The cornerstone of New Imperialism is New Racism.

The best allegory for New Racism is the tradition

The New Imperialist doesn't need to trudge around the tropics risking early death. New Imperialism can be conducted on e-mail.

of "turkey pardoning" in the United States. Every year since 1947, the National Turkey Federation has presented the US President with a turkey for Thanksgiving. Every year, in a show of ceremonial magnanimity, the President spares that particular bird (and eats another one). After receiving the presidential pardon, the Chosen One is sent to Frying Pan Park in Virginia to live out its natural life. The rest of the 50 million turkeys raised for Thanksgiving are slaughtered and eaten on Thanksgiving Day. ConAgra Foods, the company that has won the Presidential Turkey contract, says it trains the lucky birds to be sociable, to interact with dignitaries, school children and the press. (Soon they'll even speak English!)

That's how New Racism in the corporate era works. A few carefully bred turkeys—the local elites of various countries, a community of wealthy immigrants, investment bankers, the occasional Colin Powell or Condoleezza Rice, some singers, some writers (like myself)—are given absolution and a pass to Frying Pan Park. The remaining millions lose their jobs, are evicted from their homes, have their water and electricity connections cut, and die of AIDS. Basically they're for the pot. But the Fortunate Fowls in Frying Pan Park are doing fine. Some of them even work for the IMF and the WTO—so who can accuse those organizations of being antiturkey? Some serve as board members on the Turkey Choosing Committee—so who can say that turkeys are against Thanksgiving? They participate in it! Who can say the poor are anti-corporate globalization? There's a stampede to get into Frying Pan Park. So what if most perish on the way?

As part of the project of New Racism we also have New Genocide. New Genocide in this new era of economic interdependence can be facilitated by economic sanctions. New Genocide means creating conditions that lead to mass death without actually going out and killing people. Denis Halliday, who was the UN humanitarian coordinator in Iraq between 1997 and 1998 (after which he resigned in disgust), used the term genocide to describe the sanctions in Iraq. In Iraq the sanctions outdid Saddam Hussein's best efforts by claiming more than half a million children's lives.

Arundhati Roy, the author of *The God of Small Things* and *War Talk*, lives in New Delhi, India. A collection of interviews with David Barsamian, *The Checkbook and the Cruise Missile*, and a new essay collection, *An Ordinary Person's Guide to Empire*, are forthcoming from South End Press. This article was adapted from her January 16 speech to the opening plenary of the World Social Forum in Mumbai.

In the new era, apartheid as formal policy is antiquated and unnecessary. International instruments of trade and finance oversee a complex system of multilateral trade laws and financial agreements that keep the poor in their bantustans anyway. Its whole purpose is to institutionalize inequity. Why else would it be that the US taxes a garment made by a Bangladeshi manufacturer twenty times more than a garment made in Britain? Why else would it be that countries that grow cocoa beans, like the Ivory Coast and Ghana, are taxed out of the market if they try to turn it into chocolate? Why else would it be that countries that grow 90 percent of the world's cocoa beans produce only 5 percent of the world's chocolate? Why else would it be that rich countries that spend over a billion dollars a day on subsidies to farmers demand that poor countries like India withdraw all agricultural subsidies, including subsidized electricity? Why else would it be that after having been plundered by colonizing regimes for more than half a century, former colonies are steeped in debt to those same regimes and repay them some \$382 billion a year?

For all these reasons, the derailing of trade agreements at Cancún was crucial for us. Though our governments try to take the credit, we know that it was the result of years of struggle by many millions of people in many, many countries. What Cancún taught us is that in order to inflict real damage and force radical change, it is vital for local resistance movements to make international alliances. From Cancún we learned the importance of globalizing resistance.

No individual nation can stand up to the project of corporate globalization on its own. Time and again we have seen that when it comes to the neoliberal project, the heroes of our times are suddenly diminished. Extraordinary, charismatic men, giants in the opposition, when they seize power and become heads of state, are rendered powerless on the global stage. I'm thinking here of President Lula of Brazil. Lula was the hero of the World Social Forum last year. This year he's busy implementing IMF guidelines, reducing pension benefits and purging radicals from the Workers' Party. I'm thinking also of the former president of South Africa, Nelson Mandela. Within two years of taking office in 1994, his government genuflected with hardly a caveat to the Market God. It instituted a massive program of privatization and structural adjustment that has left millions of people homeless, jobless and without water and electricity.

Why does this happen? There's little point in beating our breasts and feeling betrayed. Lula and Mandela are, by any reckoning, magnificent men. But the moment they cross the floor from the opposition into government they become hostage to a spectrum of threats—most malevolent among them the threat of capital flight, which can destroy any government overnight. To imagine that a leader's personal charisma and a c.v. of struggle will dent the corporate cartel is to have no understanding of how capitalism works or, for that matter, how power works. Radical change cannot be negotiated by governments; it can only be enforced by people.

At the World Social Forum some of the best minds in the world come together to exchange ideas about what is happening around

us. These conversations refine our vision of the kind of world we're fighting for. It is a vital process that must not be undermined. However, if all our energies are diverted into this process at the cost of real political action, then the WSF, which has played such a crucial role in the movement for global justice, runs the risk of becoming an asset to our enemies. What we need to discuss urgently is strategies of resistance. We need to aim at real targets, wage real battles and inflict real damage. Gandhi's salt march was not just political theater. When, in a simple act of defiance, thousands of Indians marched to the sea and made their own salt, they broke the salt tax laws. It was a direct strike at the economic underpinning of the British Empire. It was real. While our movement has won some important victories, we must not allow non-violent resistance to atrophy into ineffectual, feel-good, political theater. It is a very precious weapon that must be constantly honed and reimagined. It cannot be allowed to become a mere spectacle, a photo opportunity for the media.

It was wonderful that on February 15 last year, in a spectacular display of public morality, 10 million people on five continents marched against the war on Iraq. It was wonderful, but it was not enough. February 15 was a weekend. Nobody had to so much as miss a day of work. Holiday protests don't stop wars. George Bush knows that. The confi-

dence with which he disregarded overwhelming public opinion should be a lesson to us all. Bush believes that Iraq can be occupied and colonized as Afghanistan has been, as Tibet has been, as Chechnya is being, as East Timor once was and Palestine still is. He thinks that all he has to do is hunker down and wait until a crisis-driven media, having picked this crisis to the bone, drops it and moves on. Soon the carcass will slip off the bestseller charts, and all of us outraged folks will lose interest. Or so he hopes.

This movement of ours needs a major, global victory. It's not good enough to be right. Sometimes, if only in order to test our resolve, it's important to win something. In order to win something, we need to agree on something. That something does not need to be an overarching preordained ideology into which we force-fit our delightfully factious, argumentative selves. It does not need to be an unquestioning allegiance to one or another form of resistance to the exclusion of everything else. It could be a minimum agenda.

If all of us are indeed against imperialism and against the project of neoliberalism, then let's turn our gaze on Iraq. Iraq is the inevitable culmination of both. Plenty of antiwar activists have retreated in confusion since the capture of Saddam Hussein. Isn't the world better off without Saddam Hussein? they ask timidly.

Let's look this thing in the eye once and for all. To applaud the US Army's capture of Saddam Hussein, and therefore in retrospect justify its invasion and occupation of Iraq, is like deifying Jack the Ripper for disemboweling the Boston Strangler. And that after a quarter-century partnership in which the Ripping and Strangling was a joint enterprise. It's an in-house quarrel. They're business partners who fell out over a dirty deal. Jack's the CEO.

So if we are against imperialism, shall we agree that we are against the US occupation and that we believe the United States

This movement of ours needs a major, global victory. Sometimes, if only in order to test our resolve, it's important to win something.

must withdraw from Iraq and pay reparations to the Iraqi people for the damage that the war has inflicted?

How do we begin to mount our resistance? Let's start with something really small. The issue is not about *supporting* the resistance in Iraq against the occupation or discussing who exactly constitutes the resistance. (Are they old killer Baathists, are they Islamic fundamentalists?)

We have to *become* the global resistance to the occupation.

Our resistance has to begin with a refusal to accept the legitimacy of the US occupation of Iraq. It means acting to make it materially impossible for Empire to achieve its aims. It means soldiers should refuse to fight, reservists should refuse to serve, workers should refuse to load ships and aircraft with weapons. It certainly means that in countries like India and Pakistan we must

block the US government's plans to have Indian and Pakistani soldiers sent to Iraq to clean up after them.

I suggest we choose by some means two of the major corporations that are profiting from the destruction of Iraq. We could then list every project they are involved in. We could locate their offices in every city and every country across the world. We could go after them. We could shut them down. It's a question of bringing our collective wisdom and experience of past struggles to bear on a single target. It's a question of the desire to win.

The Project for the New American Century seeks to perpetuate inequity and establish American hegemony at any price, even if it's apocalyptic. The World Social Forum demands justice and survival.

For these reasons, we must consider ourselves at war. ■

DEMOCRATS NEED TO OFFER A COMPELLING VISION OF A MORALLY BASED SOCIAL CONTRACT.

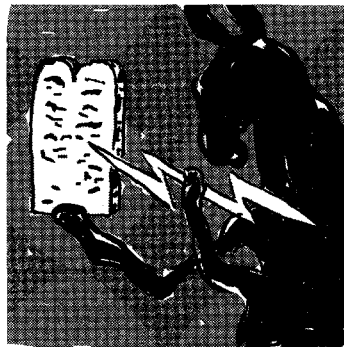
Take Back Values

DAVID CALLAHAN

There is much talk about "values" on this year's presidential campaign trail. Senator John Edwards rages that "George Bush's values are not America's values." Senator Joe Lieberman barely utters a sentence that doesn't mention values. Representative Dick Gephardt complains that people have "lost a sense of right and wrong." Top Democrats apparently have internalized the lesson taught by Bill Clinton—that the party must overcome its crippling lag on values issues. A 2000 poll by the Democracy Corps, a liberal polling group, showed that voters had vastly more trust in Republicans than Democrats on such moral basics as personal responsibility, discipline and knowing right from wrong. A more recent poll, by the Pew Research Center for the People and the Press, shows a Democratic candidate getting slaughtered in the 2004 election among voters who regularly attend religious services.

The problem is that few Democrats—on the campaign trail or off—have done well at moving beyond the Clinton strategy of playing defense on values. Democrats tend to operate in a debate defined by the right. They are good at mentioning their long marriages or their belief in personal responsibility. They slip in references to God and the Bible. And more Democrats now frame issues such as healthcare through a "family" lens, reflecting advice from pollster Stanley Greenberg and others.

Some Democrats, notably John Edwards, have attempted to move the values debate onto home turf by couching the liberal ideals of fairness and opportunity in strong moral language. These efforts are laudable, but lack the bite of the values discourse pio-



RICHARD BECKERMAN

neered by the right. Some thirty years ago, conservatives moved aggressively to establish a moral monopoly amid what Francis Fukuyama has called "the Great Disruption," namely the breakdown of the traditional family and rise of feminism and individualism. The Great Disruption played out in very personal ways for Americans, and was experienced by many—especially white men—as a full-blown social crisis. Conservatives were brilliant at leveraging the crisis to entomb liberalism. They separated working-class voters with traditional values from a Democratic Party that, in Spiro Agnew's words, favored "acid, amnesty and abortion." And, in a broader assault, they convinced large swaths of the public that just about any government program was apt to spawn social pathology. The harsh discipline of the free market was offered by conservatives as more than just a path toward greater prosperity. It was presented as a savior of America's moral character.

Today, progressives have a chance to emulate the conservative success on values by highlighting a new moral crisis. This crisis infects nearly every part of American society, from education to sports to business to a myriad of professions. It often plays out in intensely personal ways and it deeply troubles Americans. The crisis is the rise of a "cheating culture" in the United States.

Cheating is up. Cheating is everywhere. By cheating I mean breaking the rules to get ahead academically, professionally or financially. Some of this cheating involves violating the law, some does not. Either way, most of it is by people who, on the whole, view themselves as upstanding members of society.

Cheating is intended to go undetected, and trends in unethical behavior can be hard to document. Still, what evidence is available suggests that cheating increased in the 1980s and '90s, at least in comparison to the middle decades of the twentieth century. Many studies confirm that cheating by high school and college students

David Callahan is research director at Demos, a public policy group, and author of *The Cheating Culture: Why More Americans Are Doing Wrong to Get Ahead* (www.cheatingculture.com).

has increased substantially. In a 2002 survey by the Josephson Institute of Ethics, a Los Angeles-based group, three-quarters of high school students admitted they had cheated in the previous year. The IRS reports that tax evasion has soared since the early 1980s. It now costs the Treasury at least \$250 billion annually, and probably much more. Routine workplace theft totals an estimated \$600 billion a year, or 6 percent of GDP, and rose sharply in some areas during the 1990s. Cable television companies report widespread theft of services, while insurance companies say fraud is up. An orgy of music piracy has recently been followed by a surge in the piracy of movies.

Professional ethics are in terrible shape, too. Overbilling is common in just about any trade where there is billing, from nonprofit consulting to advertising to law. Conflict-of-interest problems are pervasive in medicine. Many doctors, for example, are unethically accepting payments from pharmaceutical companies—a problem highlighted by major government probes recently of Pfizer and AstraZeneca. In sports, steroids and other performance enhancing drugs have penetrated into more areas of competition, notably baseball. Barry Bonds, who recently testified in a grand jury steroids investigation, is among the superstars whose athletic accomplishments have been called into question.

The nerds aren't doing much better than the jocks. Publishing and journalism have seen an unprecedented string of scandals, embroiling leading historians like Stephen Ambrose, but also destroying the careers of ambitious young reporters like Jayson Blair and Stephen Glass. And, as highlighted in a new book by Derek Bok, *Universities in the Marketplace*, the integrity of scientific research in academia is increasingly compromised by conflicts of interest among researchers receiving corporate money.

Last but far from least are the corporate scandals. The past two decades will be remembered as the most corrupt period in business since the Robber Baron era a century ago: insider trading, \$400 hammers, S&L looting, massive healthcare scams and then the widespread lying about earnings by companies like WorldCom, Enron and HealthSouth. Beneath these headline scandals lies a vast swamp of smaller crimes by a business community that has turned ever more predatory in recent years.

Add up all the various forms of ethical and legal misconduct and you have a moral crisis of serious dimensions—one that underscores the poverty of today's values debate. America's crisis of ethics is no accidental phenomenon. It is organic to the way of life proselytized by the right. As free-market ideology has triumphed both economically and culturally since the late 1970s, such quintessential American values as fair play and honesty have sunk into decline.

Competition is an unquestioned virtue within market ideology and has been a prime mantra of conservatives for thirty years. It is seen as the foundation not just of maximum prosperity but also of individual greatness. Freedom, in the conservative worldview, is a state of pure competition where there are no checks on individual striving. Taken too far, though, competition is poisonous to people's ethics. And lately, America has taken competition too far.

*As free-market ideology has triumphed,
such quintessential American values as fair
play and honesty have sunk into decline.*

Americans are under intense pressure to do well academically and professionally, starting at a very young age. High school students believe they must go to a good college if they want to survive in an economy where the best jobs are hard to get and even harder to keep. In a legal profession transformed since the 1970s by a narrow focus on profits, overbilling by lawyers has increased. HMO doctors are easy prey for pharmaceutical companies that offer cash and perks to promote drugs for off-label uses or to push patients into clinical drug trials for which they may be unsuited. Workplace theft has risen at the same time that more businesses cut benefits and job security for their employees. Many companies now rank all their employees once or twice a year; some automatically fire those who fall in the bottom 10 percent. At the very top of the heap, CEOs face competitive pressures that didn't exist thirty years ago—most notably, the imperative to hit quarterly earnings projections and avoid stock market losses.

The growing income gap in America is also harmful to the nation's moral health. While many Americans struggle just to make ends meet, today's winners win bigger than ever before. Sluggers like Alex Rodriguez take home vastly larger paychecks now than they did a decade ago, CEO pay has skyrocketed, partners in law firms make more money than ever and so on. Large inequities within professions have emerged at the same time as broad inequality trends have increased the

stakes of getting an education and landing a skilled job. In 1975 workers with advanced degrees earned 1.8 times as much as high school graduates. This gap increased to 2.6 times in 1999.

Market ideology holds that inequality is actually a good thing, motivating people to work harder. Conservatives have seen no reason to respond to rising income gaps over the past quarter-century. "If you drive a Mercedes and I have to walk, that's a radical difference in lifestyle," comments Dinesh D'Souza of the Hoover Institution. "But is it a big deal if you drive a Mercedes and I drive a Hyundai?"

In fact, inequality is an obvious moral corrosive. As the economist Robert Frank and others have pointed out, people tend to judge their well-being in relative rather than absolute terms. There is no reason that a .285 hitter making \$700,000 a year should be dissatisfied and turn to risky steroids to hit better—except, perhaps, that he has to work with guys making ten times as much money. Conservatives are right in saying that even the poor in America are pretty well off compared with people in the Third World. The problem is that Americans don't compare themselves with Bengalis. They compare themselves with other Americans.

The new inequality has made envy among the most dominant emotions in American life. The celebrity-obsessed media pump this toxin around the clock, as does a \$250 billion advertising industry that portrays six-figure lifestyles as the norm. You don't need to read the Bible to know that all this is a recipe for bad behavior. Nor does it require a sociology degree to predict that a society ever more stratified along economic lines will be one where people trust each other less and may be more likely to live by the commandment "Do unto others before they do unto you."

Small government is another laissez-faire virtue that doesn't

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—Dean Rieck,
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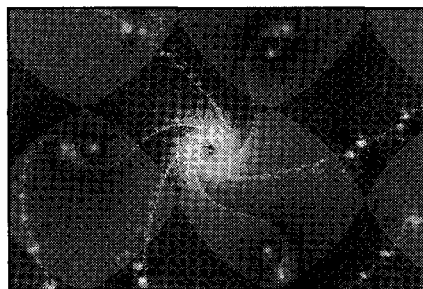
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Free Martha!

It was almost four years ago that the great stock market bubble burst. Despite revelations of systematic fraud across Wall Street and corporate America, the criminal consequences have been surprisingly minimal. The Wall Street banks, at the heart of the chicanery, mostly got off with a \$1.4 billion settlement deal with the authorities, less than 4 percent of their profits between 1996 and 1999. The disappointingly short list of the indicted and/or jailed includes a handful of Enron execs, Tyco's Dennis Kozlowski, ImClone's Sam Waksal... and not many more. Though they and their deeds are rich with symbolic value, almost none of them have become household names. The major exception was a household name before indictment: Martha Stewart, whose trial began on January 20.

Why Martha? Though most people think she's charged with insider trading, she's not. She's charged with conspiracy, obstruction of justice, lying to federal prosecutors and securities fraud—charges for which she could do serious time if convicted. And the original trade that gave rise to all this trouble was probably not illegal in itself.

So what's it all about? In December 2001 Stewart held 3,928 shares in ImClone, a New York-based biotech firm that was about to hear some bad news from the Food and Drug Administration, news that would inevitably hammer its stock—that its promising cancer drug Erbitux was not going to be approved. On the morning of December 27, the day before the bad news was to be made public, Aliza Waksal, the daughter of the firm's CEO, Sam Waksal, told Douglas Faneuil, the assistant to her Merrill Lynch broker, Peter Bacanovic, to sell the ImClone shares in her account. Soon after, Sam Waksal's accountant tried to sell Sam's shares as well. Faneuil told Bacanovic about the Waksals' lust to sell, and Bacanovic quickly called Stewart, leaving a message that ImClone's stock was "going to start trading downward." If he based that opinion on the Waksals' actions, telling other clients would violate Merrill Lynch's client confidentiality policies.

There followed a series of phone calls, whose exact content is in dispute. What isn't in dispute is that Stewart sold her ImClone shares on the afternoon of the 27th. The question is why. If Bacanovic told Stewart that the Waksals were bailing out of ImClone stock, that might have been illegal (but historically such maneuvers haven't been treated as such). Stewart claims that she had a pre-existing arrangement with Bacanovic to sell her shares if the price fell below \$60, but she hadn't put in a formal "stop-loss" order, which would have set off the sale automatically.

ImClone's stock fell on the 27th on heavy trading volume, a sign that more than a few people probably knew of the FDA action in advance. But it fell even harder after the announcement on the 28th. Stewart saved around \$45,000–\$50,000 by selling early, but it's almost impossible to say at whose expense that saving came. Compare that with, say, the huge and very visible losses suffered by stock investors who were seduced by the happy talk and lies coming from CEOs and Wall Street analysts.

At any rate, what happened on December 27 isn't at the heart of the criminal complaint. What Stewart's really in the dock for are

the defenses she mounted after news of her well-timed sale became public. The Feds accuse her and Bacanovic of conspiring to "conceal and cover up" Bacanovic's violation of Merrill's confidentiality policy as well as Stewart's real reasons for the sale. The prosecutors claim that the \$60 agreement was an invention after the fact. They also claim that aside from trying to exculpate herself, Martha also designed her alibi to prop up the stock price of her company, Martha Stewart Living Omnimedia, since her being packed off to jail would almost certainly damage the firm severely. That, to the prosecutors, was securities fraud. So even though the circumstances of the original sale were probably not criminal, it may be that Stewart thought they were, and made up the \$60 story as a self-defense. Should bad judgment be a felony?

Amazingly, *Slate* hired Henry Blodget to cover Martha's trial. Judging from his earlier dispatches, Blodget is as qualified to be a journalist as he was qualified in his previous career on Wall Street. He was a Merrill Lynch research analyst, one of the major promoters of the tech bubble, who privately disdained stocks (he famously referred to one as a "piece of shit" in an e-mail to a colleague) he was publicly recommending. Though people lost pots of money on Blodget's advice, he paid a \$4 million civil fine, but faced no criminal charges. Why isn't *he* the defendant?

Though she has millions of fans, Martha is not broadly loved. She was voted the seventh most annoying person of 2003 on the website *amiannoying.com* (falling between Osama bin Laden and Jacques Chirac). More rigorously, Gallup reports that 55 percent of Americans have an unfavorable opinion of the Diva of Domesticity, and just 36 percent a favorable one. There's little doubt that this dislike contributed to her indictment, and to the widespread assumptions of her guilt.

Why the resentment? As one young fan recently pointed out to me, it's because she severely confuses our gender codes. She invaded the traditionally male turf of big business, but her business is based on "skills that were supposed to be girly and stay-at-home." Yet while she "plays the über-homemaker, she isn't charming or warm. She's cold and efficient and a little awkward. She's not marketing the warmth and the comfort of the home, she's showing how it's like a business or a machine. That's not so easy to like, and it makes her scarier, to men especially."

Those are not good reasons to send someone to jail. But, more broadly, why are insider trading and related transgressions often treated more severely than defrauding retirees, lying to stockholders or, more prosaically, running a dangerous workplace? The only obvious victim of Martha's alleged crime is the public's perception of the fairness of the stock market. The authorities would love to preserve the illusion that everyone is equal, and that the rich and well connected have no special advantage over the masses. But that's absolute nonsense. Though people on the left often cheer the prosecution of insider trading (which, remember, is something Stewart isn't even accused of), there's nothing particularly progressive about preserving the illusion of Wall Street's fairness. It is, therefore, in the interests of both individual justice and political clarity that Martha be found innocent. DOUG HENWOOD

Nation contributing editor Doug Henwood's latest book is *After the New Economy* (New Press).

go well with strong ethics. Conservatives like to caricature government as an enemy of prosperity and as a breeder of social pathology. "I believe that government has played a big role in allowing values to erode," wrote Ben Wattenberg of the American Enterprise Institute in his 1995 book, *Values Matter Most*. The rap against big government put out by Wattenberg and others is that it has usurped the role of civil society institutions like religion and promoted a "something for nothing" ethos.

Yet these days it is weak government that should concern moralists of every ideological stripe. Two decades of downsizing and demeaning government have unleashed a flood of wrongdoing by people who judge, correctly, that they can get away with it. Tax cheats go unpunished because the IRS has been starved of resources over the past decade, even as the quantity and complexity of tax returns has risen dramatically. Investors in the stock market have been repeatedly deceived and ripped off in recent years as the Securities and Exchange Commission—politically sabotaged over two decades—did nothing. Elsewhere, in law and medicine, lax government oversight of licensing has made a mockery of disciplinary safeguards designed to root out professionals who abuse the trust of clients and patients.

Thanks to weak government, a great many Americans are living in a temptation nation. When watchdogs sleep, it is all too easy to follow our worst instincts—whether to cheat on taxes or overbill clients or rent out a firetrap apartment in the attic.

Many Americans already understand that a culture obsessed with money and saturated with envy is a morally perilous place. We understand that people will behave badly in an economy that rewards cutthroat competition and where no one enforces the rules. We fear for our own moral well-being, and even more so for that of our children. What is needed now is a political message that addresses these anxieties and links them to a public policy agenda. Boiled down to its essence, such a message should be about the broken social contract in America. Too many people who play by the rules end up as losers—or feel compelled to become cheaters just to stay afloat. Too many people who break the rules end up as winners—and learn that crime pays. Two core pillars of the American idea, optimism and egalitarianism, are being eroded. Taking their place is the cynicism of an Anxious Class that believes, rightly, that the rules aren't fair; and the hubris of a Winning Class that lives by its own rules.

America's busted social contract is already being discussed on the presidential campaign trail, most notably by Howard Dean, who gave a major policy speech on December 18 on this theme. But Dean barely mentioned the word "values" as he outlined his New Social Contract. America's crisis of ethics offers a way to preach a social contract message that is centered more heavily on virtue, now a Republican-owned franchise with a great many customers in the US electorate. Progressives must offer both a compelling story of moral decline and the way to redemption.

Beyond this, the actual policy agenda for fixing a broken social contract is hardly extraordinary. First, there must be new investments in education, healthcare, childcare and other things to insure that ordinary people who play by the rules can succeed with integrity in a postindustrial economy. Second, we need to beef up the government agencies that enforce the rules of fair play



Department of Homeland Security

ORANGE ALERT CITIZEN DEBRIEFING FORM

To be completed by all US residents. Resident terrorists and terrorists-in-training must use Form T-03.

Mark answers below:

1. The fact that Tom Ridge doesn't know any more than I do about where the next terrorist attack will come from is proof of the democratic equality that we're fighting for!

Agree ☐ Yes ☐ Never thought of that ☐

2. The fact that nothing happened during the most recent Orange Alert means that 280 million mutually suspicious folks trigger mass public hysteria that bamboozles evil-doers into losing their nerve, so Orange Alert should be 24/7.

Agree ☐ Yes ☐ Never thought of that ☐

3. During the most recent Orange Alert I noticed elderly females dressed up as little old ladies, deliberately avoiding armed men in airport terminals.

Agree ☐ Yes ☐ Never thought of that ☐

Check one:

1. Homeland Security experts have established that the next terrorist strike will be:

- a) on a structure. ☐
- b) where lots of people are. ☐
- c) where you'd least expect. ☐

Tell how you plan to protect your family:

Check one:

2. A Yellow Alert means:

- a) something could happen soon. ☐
- b) something could happen very soon. ☐
- c) something could happen at any minute, so I know exactly what to do. ☐

Multiple choice. Check any two blanks:

The most recent Orange Alert was a:

- a) false alarm. ☐
- b) dud. ☐
- c) pointless exercise in panic-mongering ☐, said the:
 - i) terrorist. ☐
 - ii) traitor. ☐
 - iii) dupe. ☐
 - iv) Democrat. ☐

During the most recent Orange Alert I felt:

- a) safe. ☐
- b) safer. ☐
- c) safer than ever, knowing that our public libraries, fire hydrants and Homeland Security centers were under armed guard. ☐

I didn't know until Homeland Security issued the alert that menace may lurk in:

- a) weekly poker games. ☐
- b) falafel stands. ☐
- c) florist shops. ☐
- d) pantries. ☐

During Orange Alerts, suspicious persons loitering around bus stops should be:

- a) shot. ☐
- b) roughed up. ☐
- c) sent to Guantánamo Bay. ☐
- d) all three. ☐

Note: You will be on Blue Alert until you have returned this form. Blue Alert status means that printing or writing by hand is forbidden.

Bruce McCall is a writer and painter whose latest book is *All Meat Looks Like South America* (Crown).

in economic life and stop indulging cheaters in the Winning Class. Third, it's long past time we declared a cease-fire in "the war against the poor," as part of a broader effort to insure that rule-breakers across all income groups stand as equals before the law. Fourth, we need major reforms to open up the democratic system to insure that more Americans have a genuine say in how society's rules are made. And fifth, there must be new initiatives

to reduce income inequality and foster greater trust across the chasms of class, race and geography.

That extreme capitalism fosters moral corrosion is not a new message. Teddy Roosevelt said as much a century ago. But, packaged right—as a defense of the American way, not an attack on it—this is a message that could redefine the values debate in US politics and change the electoral map for decades to come. ■

A VAST IMPOVERISHED POPULATION LANGUISHES IN THE MIDST OF OUR ECONOMY.

Working and Poor in the USA

BETH SHULMAN

For generations, Americans shared a tacit understanding that if you worked hard, you could earn a livable income and provide basic security for yourself and your family. That promise has been broken. More than 30 million Americans—one in four workers—are stuck in low-wage jobs that do not provide the basics for a decent life.

As we celebrate the fortieth anniversary of President Johnson's declaration of the War on Poverty, we are reminded that economic growth alone is not sufficient to combat the problem. Today, the war on poverty must be fought not on the margins but in the very mainstream of our economy. It must be a war to restore the promise of work.

While the Democratic presidential contenders are vocal about general economic conditions, ill-advised tax cuts and continuing unemployment, they have only recently begun to point out a fundamental economic failure—the failure of work to meet people's needs.

Finding ways to make sure that people who work hard can take care of their families would put the Democrats on the offensive instead of their customary defensive position on family values. It would have broad appeal to working Americans, as millions of middle-income jobs take on the characteristics of the low-wage economy—layoffs, outsourcing, unaffordable healthcare and vanishing pension benefits. And it would have great potential to help those suffering in low-wage jobs—workers like Cynthia Porter.

Cynthia Porter works full time as a certified nursing assistant at a nursing home in Marion, Alabama. When she comes on duty at 11 PM, she makes rounds, checking the residents for skin tears and helping them go to the toilet or use a bedpan. She has to make sure she turns the bedridden every two hours, or they will get bedsores. And if bedsores are left unattended, she tells me, they can get so bad you can put your fist in them. But there aren't enough people on her shift. Often only two nursing assistants are on duty to take care of forty-five residents. And Cynthia must also wash



the wheelchairs, clean up the dining rooms, mop the floors and scrub out the refrigerator, drawers and closets during her shift. Before she leaves, she helps the residents get dressed for breakfast.

For all this, Cynthia makes \$350 every two weeks. She is separated from her husband, who gives her no child support. The first two weeks each month she pays her \$150 rent. The next two weeks, she pays her water and her electric bills. It is difficult to afford Clorox or shampoo. Insuring that her children are fed properly is a stretch. She is still paying off the bicycles she bought for them last Christmas.

She can't afford a car, so she pays someone to drive her the twenty-five miles to work. There have been a few days when she couldn't find a ride. "I walked at 12 o'clock at night," she said. "I'd rather walk and be a little late than call in. I'd rather make the effort. I couldn't just sit here. I don't want to miss a day—otherwise, I might be fired." No public transportation is available that could take her all the way to work.

Cynthia lives with her three children in a small maroon-colored shack. It is miles from a main road. Inside, the plywood floor is so thin and worn that the ground can be seen below. In the next room, a toilet sinks into the floor. There is no phone. A broken heater sits against the wall; the landlord refuses to fix it.

Keeping her children's clothes clean requires great effort because Cynthia has no washing machine. Instead, she fills her bathtub halfway and gets on her hands and knees to scrub the clothes. Then she hangs them out to dry.

I first met Cynthia at a union meeting. She had a quiet, dignified presence with her dark suit and her hair pulled back in a bun. She and twenty-five others from the nursing home—all eighty of her co-workers are African-American women, like her—gathered in the little brick Masonic building outside of Marion to talk about having a union. None had ever gotten a raise of more than 13 cents an hour. Some who had been there ten years were still making \$6 an hour. But ultimately, it was the lack of respect from their employer that motivated these women. They said they often told their supervisors something important about patients, but no one listened. The home offered no promotions either. Cynthia said, "I knew it wouldn't improve without outside help."

Beth Shulman is a lawyer and consultant focusing on work-related issues. This article is adapted from The Betrayal of Work: How Low-Wage Jobs Fail 30 Million Americans (New Press).

Despite the frustration and the difficult conditions, Cynthia beams when she talks about her job. "I like helping people," she says. "I like talking with them, and shampooing their hair. I like old people. If they are down, I can really make them feel better. The patients say, 'Nobody loves me or comes to see me.' Sometimes I help the residents play dominoes. Sometimes their hands shake, but I hold them. It's a lot of fun for them. I tell them 'I love you,' and give them a hug. I like being a CNA. I'm doing what I want to be doing."

In 1962 Michael Harrington stirred the conscience of the nation with the publication of *The Other America*. He reminded a country basking in the glow of postwar prosperity that poverty was alive and well. Harrington revealed the struggles of invisible millions living in passed-over regions of the country and the economy—in Appalachia, the South, in rural America. They were caught in dying towns and industries, shunted off the main tracks of the economy into unemployment, and left to fester in idleness and despair. In a word, they were outlanders, watching as the rest of the country went to work and thrived. The nation spent the remainder of the century wrestling with this sort of jobless poverty, expanding and then contracting the welfare state as it experimented with different ways of dealing with a population cut off from the economic mainstream.

These forms of poverty persist, and the country is still arguing about what to do with its welfare recipients. But the great secret of America is that a vast impoverished population has grown up in our midst. These are not Americans who have been excluded from the world of work; in fact, they make up the core of much of the new economy. And it is estimated that low-wage jobs will make up 30 percent of the economy by the end of this decade.

Thirty million Americans make less than \$8.70 an hour, the official US poverty level for a family of four. (Most experts estimate that it takes at least double this level for a family to provide for its basic needs.) Their low-wage, no-benefits jobs translate into billions of dollars in profits, executive pay, high stock prices and low store prices.

Who are they? They are all around us in jobs essential to our lives. Low-wage workers are security guards and childcare givers. They are nursing-home workers and retail clerks. They are hospital orderlies and teachers' assistants. They are hotel workers and pharmacy technicians. They bone the chicken that we eat, clean the office buildings where we work and handle our questions and complaints at call centers.

Yet few express outrage about the plight of these workers. There is a reigning American mythology that blunts any concern: that holding a low-wage job is a temporary situation, that mobility and education and time will solve whatever problem exists.

The evidence, however, contradicts this myth. Most low-wage workers will never move up the ladder into the middle class. Economics professors Peter Gottschalk of Boston College and Sheldon Danziger of the University of Michigan found that about half of those whose family income ranked in the bottom 20 percent in 1968 were still in the same group in 1991. Of those who had moved up, nearly three-fourths remained below the median income. The US economy provides less mobility for low-wage earners, according to an Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development study, than the economies of France, Italy,



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Britain, Germany, Denmark, Finland and Sweden.

Inadequate wages are only part of the problem. Most of these workers lack basic job benefits. In 1995 less than half of workers making under \$20,000 a year were offered health insurance by their employer. Only one in five workers with incomes below \$20,000 has pension coverage. For low-wage parents with children under 6, one-third do not get paid vacations or paid holidays. And most low-wage jobs fail to provide sick pay or disability pay. These jobs leave little flexibility to care for a sick child or deal with an emergency at school—let alone the normal appointments and needs of everyday life. Quality childcare is unaffordable for most, and many nighttime shifts and employers' schedule changes make it harder and more expensive to obtain.

Low-wage workplaces are often physically dangerous and emotionally degrading. High injury rates are common. Constant surveillance, time clocks, drug testing and rigid rules reinforce the workers' pervasive sense that employers do not trust them. Fear is the chief motivator: Being five minutes late can mean losing a job. A few minutes too long in the bathroom can bring punishment. It is consistent with this lack of respect from employers that these workers are half as likely to receive employer-sponsored training as workers in higher-wage jobs.

These conditions are no accident. Over the past quarter-century, a variety of political, economic and corporate decisions have undercut the bargaining power of workers, especially those at the lower end of the work force. Those decisions included the push to increase global trade and open global markets, government efforts to deregulate industries that had been highly unionized, tight monetary policies and a corporate ideological shift away from the postwar social contract with employees and toward the principle of maximizing shareholder value. During the same period, the most

vulnerable workers were deprived of many of the institutions, laws and political allies that generally helped to counterbalance these forces. Liberal allies who historically had championed their interests mostly sat silent. Unions were in decline. Minimum-wage, fair employment and labor laws were weakened.

Today, Americans can make different choices. Democrats should call for a compact with working Americans that establishes the mutual obligations and responsibilities of employers, workers and government. The compact would have a simple and clear purpose: It would insure that if you work hard you will be treated fairly and have the resources to provide for yourself and your family.

One place to start is raising the minimum wage to \$8.70 and indexing it to inflation. The compact should require that industries receiving public funds through contracts, tax abatements or other subsidies provide quality jobs with benefits and living wages. Access to affordable healthcare must be provided to all workers and their families. Workers need to know they can get time off to be with a sick child or an elderly parent without fear of losing their jobs or a day's pay. Quality childcare and early education should be made available to their children. And workers must have the right to organize without fear of intimidation, harassment or being fired.

In the past, we have established standards and rights to insure that older Americans would not be impoverished or go without healthcare, to prevent young children from working and to insure equal opportunity in employment regardless of race, religion, national origin, sex or age. Now we must set standards to protect the well-being of all working families and the integrity of the nation. It is urgent, both morally and politically, for the Democratic candidates to confront this critical issue. ■

LETTERS

C O N T I N U E D

(Continued From Page 2)

from the Simons', and occasionally the senator would offer me a ride home in his very unassuming car.

One day as we drove past the Capitol, we saw a homeless man sleeping on a steam grate. With a look of indignation, Paul pointed to the man, and said, "Do you want to know what the legacy of Reaganomics is? This is the legacy of Reaganomics."

Senator Simon always tried to find ways to use his office and influence to help the least fortunate—he proposed programs to create jobs and wrote a book on poverty and world hunger with his brother. Paul Simon cared about people, the people he knew and the multitudes he was always trying to help. I will miss Paul Simon, and wish there were more public servants like him.

DAVID S. RUGENDORF

GOBBLEDYGOOK

Cold Spring, NY

■ What led you to give so much space to Danny Postel's attack on the very interesting British writer John Gray, professor at the London School of Economics and author of a dozen

books or so? ["Gray's Anatomy," Dec. 22] Postel, a man of no credentials, has an ax to grind but never gets it sharpened.

Postel seems to think he has summed up Gray by saying he is a conservative and guilty of "a right-wing ontology of alterity," whatever that gobbledygook may mean. That doesn't come close to describing him, and it is not, whatever Postel may believe, a sufficient label of condemnation. Gray is, in short, a deep-ecology "collapsist," pessimistic to the core about the human future, and I for one am right with him.

Postel is also absurdly wrong to think that Lovelock's Gaia theory is in disrepute and no longer a useful ecological analysis and to believe it and overpopulation are no longer issues of utmost importance to the environmental movement. He thinks Gray's use of these ideas is "downright embarrassing," but it is *The Nation* that should be embarrassed.

KIRKPATRICK SALE

RADICAL ROOTS

Austin, Tex.

■ "Sacred Rage," Baruch Kimmerling's December 15 review of books on the roots of radi-

cal Islam, is a superb short course in Terrorism Literacy 101 that Sharon, Bush and Dean need to put on their required reading list. As US troops continue to die in Iraq we need to be reminded where terrorism comes from—Israeli policies of fear and humiliation toward Palestinians, and our tacit endorsement of them, is the driving force behind Muslim outrage and violence. Unless terrorism is attacked at its source it will not be defeated.

TED S. CORIN

GOP GULAG

DeKalb, Ill.

■ Sasha Abramsky's "The Redistricting Wars" [Dec. 29] is a scary, eye-opening account of how the Republicans are trying to use democratic institutions to undermine democratic representation. When I was young, the Communist Party platform had some things I found attractive, just as the Republican platform has today. But as I came to understand that it was the aim of the Communist Party to get elected, then to alter the system so that no one with alternative ideas could challenge them, I moved on...

ROBERT SUCHNER

BOOKS & THE ARTS



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All You Need Is a Girl and a Gun

DAVID THOMSON

GODARD: A Portrait of the Artist at Seventy.

By Colin MacCabe. Farrar, Straus & Giroux. 432 pp. \$25.

Colin MacCabe's new book is more a provocative polemic than a rounded biography, but it deserves the highest praise for being inspired by the belief that in the early 1960s Jean-Luc Godard grabbed hold of the medium known as movie, shook it, broke it apart and threw it up in the air, catching enough pieces to redefine "montage," and decided that the young medium was so close to death that only radical surgery could save it—or us, its audience. In those heady years, to say "Godard" was enough. Everyone knew whom you meant, and thrilled at the shock waves that spread around him.

Today? There's the question. But it's bold of MacCabe and his publisher to say, simply, "Godard," and trust that enough people still feel the shock and understand how Jean-Luc's extraordinary "moment" has yielded to his solitude or obscurity. Only film festivals know what he is doing now, and only minds cursed with memory realize that he is still there. Or even here. By which I mean to say that Godard con-

tinues to discuss with himself whether there is life in such nostalgic combinations as film and audience. (In France in the 1960s, the new attitude to film made "audience" a synonym for society, or all of us.) What's most stimulating about MacCabe's book is his confidence that we need a new conversation about our moving pictures, as opposed to just scanning the ads, buying the tickets and the popcorn, and letting the silly sensations slip out of mind.

For once, a publisher's blurb serves a book better than its title. So forget "portrait" and the calm of old age in some sweet Swiss village (though there is *that* Godard), and think about this: "An intimate portrait of the turmoil that spawned the New Wave in French Cinema, and the story of its greatest director." I know, it's hype, and in many ways the New Wave is now beside the point. But "turmoil" is right and useful, and it reminds one of that very Godardian instinct

David Thomson is the author of The Biographical Dictionary of Film (in paperback this fall), and Rosebud: The Story of Orson Welles (Vintage). He lives in San Francisco.

that film itself is a battleground where every modern decision may be dramatized.

In his brief cameo in Godard's *Pierrot le Fou* (1965), in which he appeared as a tough little man stranded at a funeral party, wearing Godardian dark glasses as an assertion of imprisoned integrity, the Hollywood director Samuel Fuller announced that cinema was "like a battleground: Love... Hate... Action... Violence... Death... In one word, Emotion." That recipe was the childhood Godard spent with American action films, and another way of delivering his deadpan come-on (full of promise, but loaded with warning) that all you need for a movie is a girl and a gun. But *Pierrot* was also filled with anguish at the loss of two loves: It was made as Godard and his actress wife, Anna Karina, were tearing themselves apart; and it was the clearest sign yet of Godard's developing horror at the American culture that had done so much to make him.

More than MacCabe, I would say that those two "tragic" or necessary severings were absolutely typical of Godard's determined intellectual isolation, his selfishness and even his delayed adulthood. But to say that plunges us straight into the life and the first and superior part of this book. For while MacCabe flinches intellectually from the authoritative assumptions and the narrative sedateness in biography, he has a natural talent for describing life—indeed, this may be the area in which he is least like the Godard he reveres.

Jean-Luc Godard was born on December 3, 1930, in Paris. He was well-off from the start: His mother's family, the Monods, were very comfortable, illustrious in their own achievements and their social circle, and Protestant; his father, also a Protestant, was a doctor who had studied in London as well as Paris. By the time Jean-Luc was 2, his father had moved the family to the vicinity of a clinic between Nyon and Rolle, in the canton of Vaud, in Switzerland. This was one of the few things Harry Lime didn't know in Vienna in 1949, when he claimed that the only thing of value that Switzerland had ever produced was the cuckoo clock. For this young Turk in the making is in many ways Swiss—he has lived the past twenty years or so in Rolle.

Switzerland kept the family out of the war and—here's a gem of research—it allowed the boy Godard to see not just American films but wartime newsreels, sometimes with French commentary, sometimes with German. There's a fascinating seed of dialectic and Godardian method. It was

a fairly strict, highly educated household, where the children had one chance to be heard at the dinner table—if they knew a relevant quotation from literature. There again, Godard is an artist who fills his own films not just with quotations (not always sourced) but with the act of writing itself.

The young Godard was very smart, and at the age of 15 he went to Paris (really his first encounter with the city he has filmed as well as anyone) to study at the Lycée Buffon. But as he failed in his studies (out of

Godard's early films can be seen as a single surge of radical energy—and as a crash course on how to see (and think) in the dark.

laziness or arrogance), he started to frequent movie theaters—and to steal. MacCabe does not avoid this aspect of Godard's character, which made him something of an outsider in the group of young critics and would-be filmmakers that became the *Cahiers du Cinéma* crowd. It wasn't just because he preferred sitting alone, invariably in dark glasses and being cryptic, elusive or punning in conversation, that Godard failed to gain their trust.

Still, MacCabe is more interested in the way Jean-Luc became a follower of two extraordinary activists in film culture: Henri Langlois, the eccentric co-founder of the Cinémathèque Française in Paris, the world's first scholar and collector of the new medium, and thus the theater manager who began to show the history of world film to anyone interested; and André Bazin, saint, teacher, writer, father figure, the man who died on the first day of filming of François Truffaut's *400 Blows*, and to whom that picture is dedicated.

I'd surmise that MacCabe cherishes and identifies with Bazin even more than with Godard. Why not? It was when MacCabe worked for the British Film Institute that he launched the collection and publication of all of Bazin's writings on film. "All" means 17,000 pages from a man who lived to be only 40. (Unfortunately, this project was later axed.) To be brief, Bazin had a nearly religious notion that film was the essential new medium of the mass age—and the only form that might produce a saving, shared consciousness—in that it offered the ultimate rendering of reality (apart from reality itself, *n'est-ce pas?*). To that end, Bazin welcomed sound, deep focus and lengthy shots as providing the fullest possible sensation of being there in the picture. He was a great critic and a most generous man, and every one of the directors of Godard's era (from Truffaut, Rivette, Chabrol and Demy

to others a little older, like Rohmer, Chris Marker, Alain Resnais) learned from him.

MacCabe—a professor at the University of Pittsburgh and a film producer who has worked on some of Godard's later ventures—does a superb job at tracing the evolution of Godard's ideas. This is all the more important in that Godard always saw the passage from critic to filmmaker as a natural one—and that was because (maybe even before he understood it himself) he was on his way to becoming less a storyteller or a moviemaker than an ontologist steadily teaching us to study the seething interaction of the world seen and the process of observing and choosing.

While Godard started out wanting to be Sam Fuller or Nicholas Ray, he has become a cousin to Roland Barthes, Noam Chomsky or John Berger (yet with a seasoning of Jerry Lewis and the best flavors of pulp—the girl and the gun have been eschewed, but they linger in his mind).

Godard is written more for the film-theory student than the enthusiast of biography, or even the filmgoer. It does give a vivid feeling for Godard at work—on *Breathless*, say, doing it all for about \$48,000, with a quarter of that going to his American star, Jean Seberg, and then arriving at his legendary jump-cut because the film ran too long. But the great films are rather lumped together in MacCabe's discussion. In a way, that's correct, for the great run of 1959–65—*Breathless*, *Le Petit Soldat*, *Une Femme est une Femme*, *Vivre sa Vie*, *Les Carabiniers*, *Le Mépris*, *Bande à Part*, *Une Femme Mariée*, *Alphaville*, *Pierrot le Fou*—can be seen as a single surge of radical energy, with American genres being deconstructed and turned into the collage materials for an inspiring course on how to see (and think) in the dark. Still, I longed for a closer account of how Godard lived in those few years, how he invented on the spur of the moment, how he exploited people and did tricks with money. The young thief turned into a man with very mixed feelings and rather ugly business habits not always in keeping with his high-minded critiques of capitalism. The life story, sooner or later, comes down to the discovery of, marriage to and severance from Anna Karina, the naïve Danish model who spoke not a word of French when she arrived in Paris but who became an actress as vital in a director's work as Lillian Gish was to D.W. Griffith or Marlene Dietrich to Josef von Sternberg.

Karina is one of the many friends and colleagues who have talked to MacCabe, but that reporting doesn't take away from an abiding awe for Godard that stifles biog-

raphy. At one point MacCabe admits to identifying with the report by Bernardo Bertolucci that he felt like vomiting from nerves when he first met the great man. And though MacCabe makes clear Karina's feeling that Godard was the love of her life, the book doesn't treat them as equals. We get the nearly childlike romance, we infer the sex—though MacCabe's Godard remains a very cerebral guy—the miscarriage that left Karina barren, the jealousy (on his part) and even occasional violence. Still, you'd have to go to *Pierrot le Fou* again to appreciate the astonishing tension between a man who looks with ideas and a woman who looks with feeling. That is nearly a quote from the movie, and it is a testament to the harsh, sexist self-satisfaction with which Godard relied on intellectual superiority and nearly willed Karina into betraying him—as if to claim her as his fictional character.

MacCabe might say, along with Godard, that metaphor and model are everything: that theirs was a pattern of director and actress, of head and heart, doomed to failure. But there's more than a suspicion that Godard's life (and those of others near him) has been made the more difficult because of that premeditated intellectualization of experience and the archaic, bourgeois yearning that the essaylike nature of film might still contain sentimental stories.

That's why I stress the liveliness of those early films. Yes, they are like an unrestrained Picasso racing through the Louvre of movie history (there is a real Louvre sprint in *Band of Outsiders*), updating all the old masters in the attempt to redefine art history as an Althusserian path to enlightenment. But Godard was never simply that doctrinaire or that much of the professor—even his great computer, Alpha 60, is very emotional. Even granting that he was innately cold or shy, he still had expanses of vulnerability (which Karina opened up with a glance) and a youthful love of beauty. The early films are dazzling, funny, romantic, musical, passionate and impulsive. They never played to enormous audiences (they never needed to—they were so cheap). But they set fire to the screen and, all over the world, at the level of art-house cinema, they intimated that with your girlfriend (the gender direction went only one way in their minds), a borrowed camera (steal it if you have to) and a modest inheritance (a lot of New Wave films came from private money) you could be Bogart and Bacall. Godard and the directors he inspired were giddy with the great dream of being in a movie—the very thing, I'd guess, that helped the real Bogart and Bacall fall in love.

Perhaps the thing with Karina was infatuation, a mismatch or the helpless setup for an open, pretty girl and a closed, austere man. By the end of the 1960s, Godard was notably down on love and moving toward complete immersion in allegedly revolutionary sociopolitical subject matter. That move was hurried by the events of May 1968, and MacCabe is not just good but exciting on that moment, when some very smart but overly protected students (supported by an age of full employment) reckoned to turn the world upside down.

Godard settled on an idea he had long nursed: that classical entertainment movies were dead and over—and that this change was inextricably tied in with the corruption of the United States and Hollywood. This is where we really need more from MacCabe on the life to compensate for the inwardness and the stubborn intellectualization of the films. Godard has worked steadily since 1968—MacCabe gives a sense of a man who works, shoots or edits, or who tries, nearly every day. But, except for occasional returns to narrative (prompted by a need for money?), he has moved over from film to video, and from the stance of a European artist to a Swiss recluse who must be a genius.

After the breakup with Karina, Godard's films became far tougher on audiences (he could turn quite aggressive with those prepared to like him), earnestly Marxist or Maoist, and primly anti-American. MacCabe ties this to an assault on modern Hollywood cinema that is all too justified. And he covers himself on the inconsistency in Godard's later work:

I do know that in writing this book I committed myself to looking again and again at Godard's work. The life often became tiresome; we are all, like the dog returning to its vomit, condemned to repeat within a deadly limited repertory. But the work never failed to intrigue, to illuminate and to inform. Much of it is extremely difficult to obtain. Much of it requires repeated viewings before it begins to yield its treasure. Some of it is very uneven. But the worst is never less than intelligent, and the best is the best there is.

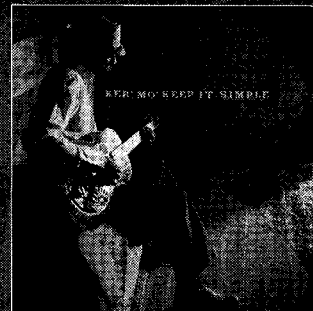
That's well said, and I hope this book will bring Godard back to American screens. In 2001 there was a retrospective at London's National Film Theatre that played to packed, young crowds. Still, I am wary, and wishing for more from this excellent book. How is Godard so lonely, yet so compelled to have female company? After Karina, he married the actress Anne Wiazemsky. After their marriage ended, he

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The lines were open, but there was nobody home
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Why can't somebody just pick up the phone
And talk to me...

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began to live with his current collaborator, Anne-Marie Miéville. And how do these ties relate to the chronic misogyny in his work, and the unending, rather cocksure use of prostitution as the metaphor for all relationships?

In the early 1970s a dire rift interrupted the old friendship between Truffaut and Godard. In haughty tones, Godard the thief accused Truffaut (with some justice) of settling for boulevard entertainment. Truffaut replied in a crushing letter: "Here you are...as fond as ever of making grand gestures and spectacular announcements, as arrogant and dogmatic as ever, secure on your pedestal, indifferent to others...." It's betrayal again (a common motif in Godard's narrative films), and though Godard is the greater artist, Truffaut's assessment of his character wasn't far off. "You've been acting like a shit," he told Jean-Luc.

There's an attitude in Godard, despite the assertions of wanting to converse, that says, Don't argue or cross me about such things. And this book does not alter the notion of his brilliant immaturity. The most fascinating point of all applies more broadly than to Godard; it reaches out to anyone who believes that film is more important than the world. Maybe film is not the great new language of engagement with the world that Bazin hoped it would be. Perhaps it is, instead, a vehicle more suited to dreaming, sensationalism and not wanting to grow up. Perhaps language—the construct of words—was always subtler, deeper and more humane.

Here's a remarkable passage from Godard the young theorist, writing in 1956, trying to pin down the virtues of and the affinity between cinematography and montage:

If direction is a look, montage is a heart-beat. To foresee is the characteristic of both: but what one seeks to foresee in space, the other seeks in time. Suppose you notice a young girl in the street who attracts you. You hesitate to follow her. A quarter of a second. How to convey this hesitation? *Mise-en-scène* will answer the question 'How shall I approach her?' But in order to render explicit the other question 'Am I going to love her?' you are forced to bestow importance on the quarter of a second during which the two questions are born. It may be, therefore, that it will be for the montage rather than the *mise-en-scène* to express both exactly and clearly the life of an idea or its sudden emergence in the course of the story.

How odd that this furious analysis misses the clarity, the exact hesitation, with which words have evoked the moment. It

reminds me of a scene in *My Life to Live* where the philosopher Brice Parain tells a story from Dumas's *Twenty Years After*: how Porthos puts a bomb in a cellar, and as he walks away with head down, notices the movement of his own legs. How does that happen? he wonders. The mystery transfixes him, and he is killed in his own explosion. "In sum, the first time

he thought, it killed him."

There's a lost writer in Godard, to be sure, and it's never clearer than in those lovely and poignant places where he actually writes on film—the hand, the curling of the letters, the line of sense. Could it be the ultimate lesson in Godard's career that plunging into the dark was a misreading of his map? ■

Lust for Life

GEORGE SCIALABBA

STORIES FROM THE CITY OF GOD: Sketches and Chronicles of Rome, 1950–1966.

By Pier Paolo Pasolini. Edited by Walter Siti, translated by Marina Harss. Other Press. 232 pp. \$24.

The afterlife of Italian poet, novelist, critic and filmmaker Pier Paolo Pasolini brings to mind some familiar lines from Auden's "In Memory of W.B. Yeats": "Time that is intolerant/Of the brave and innocent.../Worships language and forgives/Everyone by whom it lives..."

Time has doted on Pasolini's friends, countrymen and sometime antagonists Eugenio Montale and Italo Calvino but has neglected the once equally celebrated Pier Paolo. His films have never gone into full eclipse, but his poems, fiction, screenplays, literary criticism and political commentary, which engaged all literate Europe during his lifetime, have seldom traveled across the Atlantic.

"Mad Ireland hurt you into poetry," Auden continued, addressing Yeats. Though the young Pasolini worshiped language, mad and ineffably wicked Italy eventually hurt him into idiosyncratic politics and extravagant rhetoric. He adopted one medium after another, fascinated at first by new formal possibilities and soon distracted into perfervid polemic. His preaching was sometimes inspired; it was also, inevitably, timebound. He was braver and more innocent than Montale, Calvino or virtually anyone else among his contemporaries. But political passion overwhelmed aesthetic concentration, and so, outside Italy at any rate, he has forfeited literary immortality.

Pasolini was born in 1922 in Bologna. The family spent summers with relatives at Casarsa, in Italy's northeastern corner. The local peasantry spoke an ancient dialect, Friulian, in which Pasolini wrote his first poems. Interest in dialects was reviving in mid-twentieth-century Italy, and Pasolini

became one of the foremost practitioners and critics of Italian dialect poetry.

After the Second World War, with a degree from the University of Bologna, the beginnings of a literary reputation and a secure job teaching secondary school, Pasolini was happy with provincial life. But for the first of many times, his uncontrollable sexuality landed him *al brodo*—in the soup. Accused of having sex with teenage boys—his lifelong, unashamed practice—he was expelled from the Communist Party and forced to resign from public school teaching.

Self-exiled to the anonymity of Rome, he spent the first months of the 1950s as a walker in the city, discovering the slum districts and absorbing *romanesco*, the Roman dialect. Though his work—teaching private school and freelance writing—was poorly paid and exhausting, his passion for the life and, above all, the *ragazzi*, or young men, of the Roman streets was inexhaustible. By the end of the decade, his novels (*The Ragazzi* and *A Violent Life*) and his first film (*Accattone*), full of vivid sex, colorful and often incomprehensible slang, and a murderous poverty that belied postwar Italy's "economic miracle," catapulted him into national prominence, while *The Ashes of Gramsci* (1957), an anguished meditation in verse on the Italian condition, was hailed by Calvino as "one of the most important facts of Italian postwar literature and certainly the most important in the field of poetry." It was also in these years that Pasolini began writing sketches about Roman life, now collect-

George Scialabba wrote the introduction to *Leonardo Sciascia's Day of the Owl*, which has just been reissued by New York Review Books.

ed in *Stories From the City of God*, in a new translation by Marina Harss.

Pasolini's career thereafter was a dazzle of publicity and controversy. Anna Magnani and Maria Callas both emerged from legendary seclusion to make films with him. (Callas fell in love with him, only to suffer bitterly when he could not reciprocate.) Pasolini's 1964 epic, *The Gospel According to St. Matthew*, the first (perhaps the only) great religious film by a homosexual Marxist, nonplussed both the Church and the left. Alternating with the harsh realism and surrealistic symbolism of his contemporary subjects, he made film versions of the Oedipus story, *Medea*, an African *Oresteia*, *The Decameron*, *The Canterbury Tales*, *The Arabian Nights* and the Marquis de Sade's *120 Days of Sodom*. He was arraigned for immorality thirty-three times, usually in connection with the banning of one or another of his films, an ordeal that provoked parliamentary protest and contributed to the liberalization of Italy's postwar Constitution. He was regularly invited to speak or write in various Communist forums and regularly denounced in others. The *Corriere della Sera*, Italy's *New York Times*, offered him an unprecedented front-page column. In 1975, at the zenith of his fame and talent—his last year's columns set all of newspaper-reading Italy on its ear and drew responses from Calvino, Alberto Moravia, the Italian prime minister and thousands of others—he was murdered by a teenage boy he had picked up.

Pasolini's life was a maelstrom of contradictions: the anarchical Communist; the anticlerical Christian; the sexual revolutionary with grave reservations about legalizing divorce and abortion; the scholar of antique poetic forms who became an avant-garde *cinéaste*; the cordial hater of the bourgeoisie and its minions, who nevertheless scoffed at the student revolt of 1968 and instead defended the police; the notorious transgressor, almost the living negation, of traditional values, who nevertheless inveighed incessantly against "false modernity," called for the abolition of television, compulsory education and long hair, and told an interviewer that "the people I respect most are those who haven't gone beyond the fourth grade."

What explains Pasolini's chaotic sensibility, if anything does, is (in his own words) "a violent load of vitality." His molten temperament made aesthetic reserve, rhetorical restraint or analytical detachment impossible. And besides, so much seemed to him at stake: not merely institutional change but the extinction of a form of life, the pa-

ganism of rural Southern Italy and of the "paleoindustrial" Roman *borgate*, working-class neighborhoods where adolescents had "barely even heard of the Madonna" but at least lived and judged from firsthand rather than predigested experience.

"I have become convinced," he wrote near the end of his life, "that poverty and backwardness are not by any means the worst ill." Has the (partial) conquest of pre-modern poverty and servitude been worth the price in psychic stability, physical rootedness, spontaneity and grace? In one form or another, this question has troubled a great many modern intellectuals. Along with

its blessings, modernity has entailed, or at least been accompanied by, a vast blight of uniformity and superficiality. The disappearance of the dialects, with their unique rhythms and nuances, destroyed by "the horrendous language of television news, advertising, official statements," was Pasolini's first clue, which he followed up brilliantly, even if sometimes eccentrically (as in his pronouncement that the sex organs of the Roman underclass had decayed from one generation to the next). Consumerism, he warned, is "a genuine anthropological cataclysm," threatening to eclipse "the grace of obscure centu-

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ries...the scandalous revolutionary force of the past."

He raged against television, not only for homogenizing language and deadening imagination but also for fostering a meaningless, weightless sexual permissiveness. "It has been television," he charged, "which...has brought to a close the age of pity and begun the age of *hedone*." Many people were astonished by this, coming from the avatar of cinematic sensuality. What he meant, as biographer Barth David Schwartz put it (in his magnificent *Pasolini Requiem*), is that "the demystification of sex had passed directly to its predictable and obligatory merchandising," leaving most people—or so he judged—neither freer nor wiser nor happier.

It was not always clear—in fact, it scarcely ever was—exactly what Pasolini offered as an alternative to the depredations of "progress." (Calvino once wrote that debating him was "like hailing down a Formula One racedriver in the middle of his circles on the track, to ask for a ride.") He admitted freely that he was often too impatient and too exasperated to make sense, that he only had time and strength to articulate "the full force of cold rejection, of desperate useless denunciation." Here is a typically maddening and illuminating specimen of Pasolini's sublime, crackpot antimodernism:

Young males are traumatized by the duty permissiveness imposes on them—that is to say, the duty always and freely to make love. At the same time they are traumatized by the disappointment which their "sceptre" has produced in women, who formerly either were unfamiliar with it or made it the subject of myths while accepting it supinely. Besides, the education for, and initiation into, society which formerly took place in a platonically homosexual ambience is now because of precocious couplings heterosexual from the onset of puberty. But the woman is still not in a position—given the legacy of thousands of years—to make a free pedagogic contribution: she still tends to favor codification. And this today can only be a codification more conformist than ever, as is desired by bourgeois power, whereas the old self-education, between men and men or between women and women, obeyed popular rules (whose sublime archetype remains Athenian democracy). Consumerism has therefore finally humiliated the woman by creating for her another intimidating myth. The young males who walk along the street laying a hand on the woman's shoulder

with a protective air, or romantically clasping her hand, either make one laugh or cause a pang. Nothing is more insincere than the relationship to which that consumerist couple gives concrete expression.

Daft, of course. Still, I'm not sure that Michel Foucault, who wrote several treatises about sexuality in the last decade of his life, produced in them a more suggestive paragraph.

Pasolini called himself "the most ancient of the ancients and the most modern of the moderns." What he meant by that, and what he hoped to accomplish, is hinted at in another remarkable passage, a comment on the *Oresteia*:

After Athena's intervention, the Furies—unbridled, archaic, instinctive, out of nature—also survive: and they too are gods, they are immortal.... They must be transformed while leaving their irrationality intact: mutated, that is, from Curse-makers into Blessing-Givers. Italian Marxists have not, I repeat, posed themselves this problem... the transformation of Curses into Blessings, of the desperate, anarchical irrationalism of the bourgeoisie into an irrationalism...that is new.

Not the old, premodern irrationalism, notice, but one that is "new," i.e., free, egalitarian, fully modern.

In his last column, published two days before his murder, Pasolini complained poignantly: "In the end I am angry at the silence that has always surrounded me.... No one has intervened to help me forward and to develop more thoroughly my attempts at an explanation." Nor has anyone since. Instead, what Norman Mailer had written a few years earlier about D.H. Lawrence in *The Prisoner of Sex* now seems true of Pasolini: "The world has been technologized and technologized twice again in the forty years since his death, the citizens are technologized as well.... What he was asking for had been too hard for him, it is more than hard for us; his life was, yes, a torture, and we draw back in fear, for we would not know how to try to burn by such a light."

A small garland of narratives and essays, *Stories From the City of God* chronicles Pasolini's ambivalent relationship with Rome. In the stories, most of the protagonists are young boys from the slums. The youngest of them, an urchin Pasolini befriends at a public beach, is innocent, generous, trusting. All the rest are hustlers. ("Hustlers" is actually the meaning of *ragazzi di vita*, which is the Italian title of Pa-

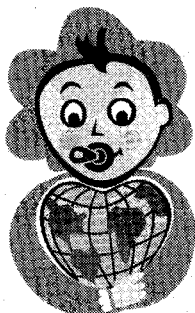
solini's first novel, *The Ragazzi*.) Some are amusing, like Romoletto, who steals a big fish at the fish market, finds that it's rotten, and figures out how to sell it anyway. For the most part, though, they're not particularly clever or vital. What interests Pasolini, more than their beauty or wit, is their pathos. Their bodies have not yet thickened, their intelligence narrowed or their sympathies withered, but they are afflicted nonetheless by a dim sense that all this is inevitable. The book opens with a lovely sketch of a nameless Trastevere boy, a chestnut vendor. ("Trastevere" means "across the Tiber," where the slums were.) "I would like to understand," Pasolini writes, "the mechanisms by which the Trastevere—shapeless, pounding, idle—lives inside of him." "Trastevere Boy" was written in 1950; by the end of the decade Pasolini had fulfilled his ambition.

The best of the stories here is the longest, "Terracina." Luciano and Marcello steal a couple of bicycles and ride out to the fishing village of the title, where Marcello has relatives. Uncle Zocculitte takes them on as assistants. The age-old routines of Mediterranean fishermen are briefly but vividly described against the charmed background of sea and bay, which are separated by the stony promontory of Circeo, where Circe bewitched Ulysses. Luciano is also bewitched, but unlike Ulysses he doesn't escape. He takes the boat out alone one Sunday and foolishly, longing for a first taste of freedom, passes beyond the promontory into the open sea, where a gale blows the boat over. Terracina is an idyll, but Trastevere is a fate.

"Women of Rome," seven short vignettes written in 1960 to accompany a book of photographs, is more trenchant and melancholy, less tentative and wistful, than the sketches of ten years before. There is a brief portrait of Anna Magnani (the star of his 1962 film *Mamma Roma*) at a party, as elemental and magnetic as onscreen. There is another couple walking down the street, this one pre-consumerist, their handclasp signifying a "right of ownership" in which she is "silently, sadly, complicitous." There are open-air fruit sellers, women "strong as mules, hard as stone, ill-humored." And with good reason: "Their lives are limited to two or three things: a small, dark house, old as the Colosseum, in a dark alley behind the Campo dei Fiori...two, three or four children, half boys and half girls, half toddlers and half adolescents, perhaps one of them in the army; and a husband with a beat-up car, who speaks as if he had a boiling hot battery in his throat, red in the face and pasty skinned, with a face so wide you

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could fit all of Terracina in it." It was by no means only Rome's *ragazzi* that Pasolini knew, cared about and despaired over.

The essays or "chronicles" in this collection are slight but marvelous. They are mostly short reports for newspapers or magazines: some humorous, like "The Disappearing Wild Game of the Roman Countryside," about the travails of hunters at the hands of the Italian bureaucracy, and "The Corpse'll Stink All Week Long!," about styles of soccer fandom; others on slang, the postwar literati, urban renewal and (naturally) the psychology of the *ragazzi di vita*. There is a powerful trio of pieces on new and old Roman shantytowns (written for the Communist journal *Vie nuove*, where party leader Palmiro Togliatti had once tried unsuccessfully to bar Pasolini from appearing because "such a man is unfit for family readers"); an uncharacteristically solemn but moving report on the funeral of a well-known labor leader, tens of thousands of workers silently raising and lowering their fists as the coffin plods down the Corso d'Italia behind a band; and a witty throwaway "day in the life" piece about

being cheated by film producers and party-hopping with his friend Moravia. In Marina Harss's lively translation, these "chronicles" are more concrete and colorful than the furious polemics of Pasolini's last years (only a few of which are available in English, as *Lutheran Letters*, a 1983 volume translated by Stuart Hood), to which they make an excellent prelude.

As with other inspired fools, Pasolini's audacity may be his chief legacy. The Sicilian writer Leonardo Sciascia—wry, skeptical, reserved—could not have been more different. One might have expected antipathy. And in fact, they often disagreed. But they understood each other. After one or another of Pasolini's provocations, an editor asked Sciascia for a response. Pasolini "may be wrong," Sciascia replied, he "may contradict himself," but he knows "how to think with a freedom which very few people today even aspire to." Exactly. Like Lawrence, Pasolini had no truck with common sense or conventional wisdom, and he paid the price. Sounding foolish is most intellectuals' deepest fear. Pasolini was fearless. ■

You Had to Be There

ROBIN BLACKBURN

1968: The Year That Rocked the World. By Mark Kurlansky. Ballantine. 441 pp. \$26.95.

Old soldiers, they say, don't die, they just fade away. For some reason 1968 hasn't died, nor has it faded away. As Mark Kurlansky's book testifies, it is still with us, alive and kicking. Surely we don't need yet another book on the *événements*? Leftists and radicals can be encouraged that the writer of a best-

seller, *Cod: A Biography of the Fish That Changed the World*, sees an audience for a new book on 1968. Unlike the last spate of books, which appeared in 1998, *1968: The Year That Rocked the World* doesn't even mark an obvious anniversary. The fondness of publishers for such works comes, no doubt, from the power of demographics—1968 being the baptism of the first wave of baby boomers—and of their own memories. Sixties glamour can still make converts in surprising places—for instance, the authorities at Columbia University, who, in a film celebrating the institution's 250th anniversary, proudly

cited its 1960s rebellions, so much deplored at the time, as one more proof that Columbia leads the way.

"An attempt at objectivity on the subject of 1968 would be dishonest," writes Kurlansky, who was twenty that year, "of the generation that hated the Vietnam War, protested against it, and has a vision of authority shaped by the memory of the peppery taste of tear gas." He uses press reports, memoirs and interviews to put together a story that works its way through the calendar, from January to December, by way of demos, general strikes, insurrections, assassinations, manifestos and mass resistance, ranging from Saigon to Chicago, Paris to Prague, Berlin to Mexico City. By the end, the old order has been shaken but is still very much in place. Yet a new sensibility is evident and a new perspective glimpsed.

While 1968 was a remarkable year, the

Robin Blackburn, the former editor of New Left Review, spent 1968 in Havana, Prague, Berlin and London. His most recent book is Banking on Death (Verso), which just appeared in paperback.

only way to make sense of it is to insert it into some larger narrative of the 1960s and the twentieth century as a whole. For Tom Nairn, 1968 announced *The Beginning of the End*, the title of a short book he published at the time. But the end of what? The postwar "Golden Age"? "Monopoly capitalism"? Stalinism? Patriarchal authority and bureaucracy? A Eurocentric world? A social order defined by material rather than mental production? These all hint at parts of the answer and help to explain why 1968 retains a hold on the imagination, notwithstanding such later turning points as 1989 and 2001. Like Nairn, Kurlansky stresses the centrality of communication in the "global village," as theorized by Marshall McLuhan. Major events in widely scattered regions—the Tet Offensive, the Paris barricades, the Democratic convention in Chicago, the invasion of Czechoslovakia—were seen around the world in real time, and became mixed up with one another.

In his conclusion, Kurlansky reproduces the photo of Earth spinning in space, with the Moon's curve in the foreground, transmitted from Apollo 8 in December 1968. "As the craft approached the moon, it turned around and from space sent back to earth the first astonishing photos of our little blue-and-white planet," he writes. "The television broadcast and photographs from Apollo 8 gave a sense, in this first global year that this, too, like so many other milestones that year, was an event the whole world was watching." As Kurlansky sees it, the sight of "this planet of blue seas, rich vegetation, and endless strife" prompted a sort of mirror-phase epiphany as humanity saw its abode from space (he compares this to Dante emerging from the underworld at the end of the *Inferno*). The astronaut Michael Collins later declared: "I really believe that if the political leaders of the world could see their planet from a distance of... 100,000 miles, their outlook could be fundamentally changed.... The tiny globe would continue to turn, serenely ignoring its subdivisions.... The earth must become as it appears: blue and white, not capitalist or Communist; blue and white, not rich or poor; blue and white, not envious or envied."

Such yearnings were to be encountered in strange places that year, as a long process began that was eventually to transform conservatives into revolutionaries and revolutionaries into conservatives. In 1968 French students and workers put on a faithful, if almost bloodless, simulacrum of a revolution, but its target, de Gaulle's Fifth Republic, was an amalgam of neocapitalist modernity and political *ancien régime*. The revolt against

it celebrated the small-scale and the artisan. The students complained that in the new age of mass higher education they never saw their professors, except occasionally on TV. The utopian slogans of the Situationists—"take your desires for reality," "under the paving stones lies the beach"—scorned high tech. They were scribbled on walls, or laboriously embossed using the silk-screen process.

The student rebels, defending a pastoral ideal of the past as much as a vision of the future, collided first with the university authorities, then with a police force hardened by the bloody suppression of Algerian demonstrators, and finally with TV cameras that carried images of the confrontation into every French home—and, before long, by satellite, around the globe. By chance, the clashes of May coincided with the first meeting between American and Vietnamese peace negotiators in Paris, so there was a particularly large gathering of international reporters on hand.

The students' aims combined the libertarian with aspirations to a visionary wholeness and the return of a lost age, articulated at its most radical in the famous Situationist pamphlet denouncing "the poverty of student life." The impoverishment was cultural as much as material. The state had decreed a rapid expansion of higher education but not the cash needed to sustain the ideal of the university: "Once upon a time, universities were respected: the student persists in the belief that he is lucky to be there. But he arrived too late.... A modern education system demands mass production of students who are not educated and have been rendered incapable of thinking."

In February 1968 the Situationists for once managed to be tactical and concrete enough to win an election, albeit only to a seemingly inconsequential body, the student union at the University of Strasbourg. They proceeded to dissolve the union and use its funds to issue their famous pamphlet calling for a global uprising. A judge was brought in to evict them and restore order. He explained—it was now March—that in three weeks of power the accused had devoted themselves to "the abolition of work, total subversion and a worldwide proletarian revolution with 'unlicensed pleasure' as its only goal.... sinking to outright abuse of their fellow students, their teachers, God, religion, the clergy, and the governments and political systems of the entire world." Actually, a pithy summary of their case.

With the eviction of the Strasbourg Situationists, the baton passed to a small group of self-described *enragés* at the new college at Nanterre, outside Paris, who had demanded—a modest installment of "unli-

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censed pleasure"—the right to cook in their dorms, change the furniture, discuss politics and entertain visitors of the opposite sex. Failing to prevent some of the students from putting their demands into effect, the authorities called in the cops. As Kurlansky observes: "How twenty-five mischief makers turned into a force of one thousand... [and] in a matter of weeks became fifty thousand and by the end of May ten million, paralyzing the entire nation, is a testament to the consequences of over-zealous government. Had the government from the beginning ignored the *enragés*, France might never have had 1968." The workers had their own quarrel with the government—it had just hiked social security payments while cutting back benefits—but it was those pictures of police clubbing students that triggered a wave of demonstrations, strikes and factory occupations.

The tactic of the occupation had up to this point been used only on a small scale and in an episodic way—for example the occupation of Sproul Hall at Berkeley in 1964—but now it embraced hundreds of colleges and thousands of factories. It was to spread to countries like Britain, which, unlike the United States, had never known the sit-in strike. Kurlansky hardly discusses Italy, though the scale of factory occupations became even wider than in France that year. The occupation tactic—spread by TV images more than leftist agitation—seemed to embody the ideal of a self-managed society in which citizens could begin to regain control of their everyday life.

The 1968 rebellions came at the end of two decades of extraordinary growth throughout the West, but there was much latent dissatisfaction with the often contradictory and alienating results of consumerist affluence. As an American politician put it:

We will find neither national purpose nor personal satisfaction in a mere continuation of economic progress, in an endless amassing of worldly goods. We cannot measure national spirit by the Dow Jones Average, nor national achievement by the Gross National Product. For the Gross National Product includes air pollution, and ambulances to clear our highways from carnage. It counts special locks for our doors and jails for the people who break them. The Gross National Product includes the destruction of the redwoods and the death of Lake Superior. It grows with the production of napalm and missiles and nuclear warheads.... It includes... the broadcasting of television programs which glorify violence to sell goods to our children.... And if the Gross

National Product includes all this, there is much that it does not comprehend. It does not allow for the health of our families, the quality of their education, or the joy of their play. It is indifferent to the decency of our factories and the safety of our streets alike.

As many will have realized, this was not an early salvo from Ralph Nader but one of the last perorations of Bobby Kennedy, the former Joe McCarthy aide who, as Attorney General, permitted the FBI to tap Martin Luther King Jr.'s phone. By the time he came to utter these words he was a presidential candidate who had been changed by the civil rights struggle and the mounting evidence of disaster in Vietnam.

There was scarcely a week, let alone a month, in 1968 when images of the pitiless US war in Vietnam did not provoke demonstrations and other solidarity actions, both in US cities and campuses and around the world. The best-reported demos were in Europe, where a wing of the established order thought Washington must be stopped. Kurlansky quotes the words of a liberal French editor, Jean-Jacques Servan-Schreiber, alarmed at the US combination of technological and military prowess with a messianic sense that only its own way of life could save the world: "If Europe, like the Soviet Union, is forced out of the running, the United States will stand alone in its futuristic world. This would be unacceptable for Europe, dangerous for America and disastrous for the world.... A nation holding a monopoly of power would look on imperialism as a kind of duty, and would take its own success as proof that the rest of the world should follow its example."

The national narratives of 1968 have to be understood in a global and epochal context. Africa's decolonization meant that battles over civil rights in the American South—and the riots erupting in Northern slums—were far more embarrassing to Washington than ever before. The new women's movement first gained some public notice in the United States in the 1960s with the founding of NOW, though this was only a hint of the wider horizon of "women's liberation" that was to come. If the French took the 1968 Oscar for reviving political revolution, then the second-wave feminists of North America undoubtedly carried off the prize for carrying forward what Juliet Mitchell called "the longest revolution," the emancipation of women.

Kurlansky furnishes thumbnail sketches of several of the countries that witnessed upheaval in 1968; Czechoslovakia, Mexico and the United States, in addition to France,

are given a chapter or more. The impact of China and Mao's Cultural Revolution is seriously underplayed, but Cuba is brought in because of Che Guevara (killed in 1967, of course, but swiftly adopted as a left-wing martyr and international icon of revolutionary virtue). Guevara's concept of a new "Socialist Man" depicted an ideal that had unexpected points of contact with the sentiments quoted earlier from Bobby Kennedy. Kurlansky also brings in Cuba because of the significant gatherings there, notably the January International Cultural Congress. He doesn't seem to know that when some of the American delegates met with Castro, the Cuban leader took out a large map of Chicago and quizzed them on what was likely to happen at the Democratic Party convention.

While acknowledging that the official position of Students for a Democratic Society, the main US New Left organization of the time, was "critical support" for the Cuban Revolution, Kurlansky claims that many SDS members were seduced by the revolution's social achievements, to the point of justifying Castro's dictatorship as a necessary evil given the US siege against the island. In fact, while visitors pointed to Cuba's successes, they were often rather critical of the Cuban government, of its voluntarism and military model of organization—K.S. Karol's widely read *Guerrillas in Power* being a case in point. Somehow those who fell under the influence of China and Maoism found it more difficult to mix support and criticism, opting instead for starry-eyed praise and myth-making. While there was a Mao cult inside and outside China, this was not true of Castro.

Cuba was both culturally and geographically accessible; China was not. (Cuba also had good music and film and great beaches, another contrast with austere Maoist China.) Cuba's successes and failures were not difficult to identify. Education, healthcare, housing and telephone calls were free, and there was only a nominal charge for public transport. On the other hand, its political system was an emergency affair, with the Constitution of 1940 still supposedly in place. In the first months of 1968 Castro denounced a "micro-faction" of former Cuban Communist cadres and called for the abandonment of slavish attempts to imitate the Soviet model. But by the end of the year, the Cuban leader had endorsed the occupation of Czechoslovakia, souring relations with many New Left supporters. Within a couple of years, many who had attended the 1968 Congress of Intellectuals addressed a public protest to Castro when the Cuban authorities detained the poet Heberto Padilla for

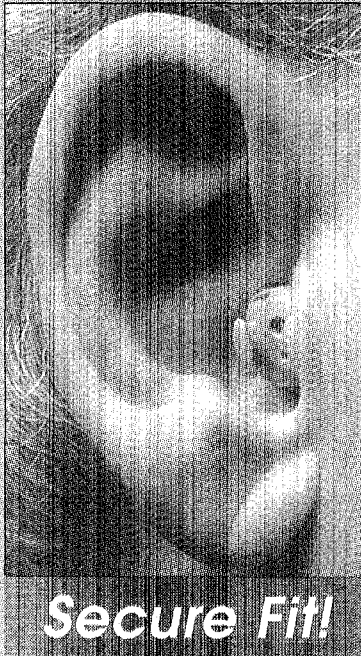
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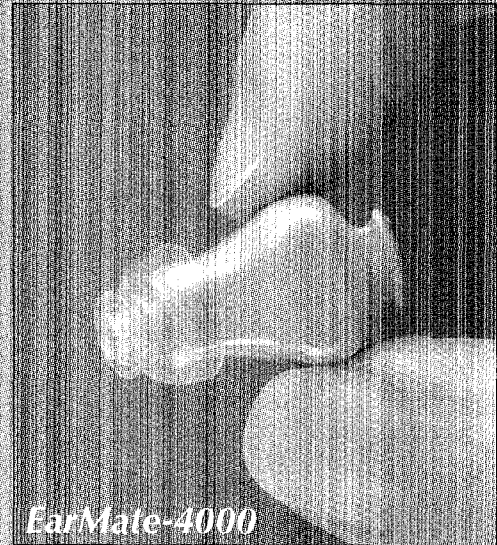
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a month for "counterrevolutionary" views. For some reason, the extraordinary mayhem of China's Cultural Revolution—vividly evoked in the recent movie *Morning Sun*—prompted no such solemn and collective censure from foreign sympathizers of the Chinese revolution.

Kurlansky is not much interested in the intragroup dynamics that gave rise, in some revolutionary subcultures, to the phenomenon of "political correctness." This was something that perhaps owed a little to the idiom of an older left, but PC now targeted deeply embedded racial and gender assumptions. Young revolutionaries invented a new vocabulary, etiquette and sensibility. I recall talking to a young woman at a Washington gathering addressed by Bill Ayers, a leader of the Weather Underground, who mentioned that she had met a compatriot of mine at a demo the previous day. "What's his name?" I asked. "Why do you assume that I'm speaking about a man?" she replied, covering me in confusion. (My interlocutor later became a feminist therapist, said to number Princess Diana among her clients.)

The ability of a secretive elite of "stupid white men" to run the world was first exposed to mockery in 1968. By adopting a pro-war plank and anointing Hubert Humphrey as its champion, the Democratic Party furnished the perfect target for a Yippie put-on in Chicago. At a press conference they nominated Pigasus the pig as their candidate. Kurlansky explains that there were really two rival pigs and that, in a further twist, Jerry Rubin and Abbie Hoffman could not agree which was the best contender. To those who saw it on TV, Yippie drollery rendered even more incomprehensible the viciousness of Mayor Daley's club-wielding policemen. The demonstrators chanted "The world is watching you," but there was no letup.

Kurlansky is too inclined to celebrate American radicals' weakness for expletives of the "Off the pigs" variety. A movement that fails to express its aims better than this has a problem. The language of European radical leaders like Daniel Cohn-Bendit in Paris and Rudi Dutschke in West Berlin was different. Of course, the assassinations of Malcolm X and Martin Luther King Jr. showed that eloquent leadership carried its own risks. And if European revolutionary thought was more theoretically ambitious, American activists had a stiffer fight on their hands, from the early battles of the Student Nonviolent Coordinating Committee, in which life and limb were at stake, to the later exertions of a many-sided—and ultimately successful—antiwar movement.

What were the '68 rebellions really about? The Prague Spring had its 2,000-word statement. The French movement of May, triggered by police brutality, escalated to a frontal assault on Gaullist capitalism. The Situationist slogans spoke the movement's dreams but the attack on the "personal power" embodied by the Fifth Republic's presidential system probably evoked the widest popular response. Campus revolts throughout the West attacked US militarism but also sought to achieve "student power" and "participatory democracy." In the 1960s there was a lot of mileage to be obtained by denouncing the established order for not living up to its own ideals. Just as American SDS stood for Students for a Democratic Society, Czechoslovakia's Dubcek called for "socialism with a human face."

The year was experienced very differently in the East, West and Third World, and from country to country, but the convulsions soon became mixed up in people's minds, and produced unexpected reverberations. Soviet leader Leonid Brezhnev involuntarily helped Nixon win the election by invading Czechoslovakia. In France, the Communist-led trade unions briefly backed the student uprising, despite the movement's anti-Stalinism. Allen Ginsberg and Fidel Castro, who had thrown the poet out of Cuba in 1965 for protesting his government's treatment of homosexuals, made common cause against the war in Vietnam. Kurlansky notes these ironies, but not the curious fact that in 1968 the Communists in France and Czechoslovakia successfully practiced nonviolent direct action, even as some members of the student left were rejecting nonviolence. In France the Communists extracted huge concessions from de Gaulle, while 95 percent of Czechoslovak Communists came out in favor of Dubcek, forcing the Soviets to bring him back for a year. Despite the leverage they had obtained, the French and Czech Communists chose to settle for a paltry compromise.

Of course, 1968 was fueled by powerful utopian and antinomian impulses. As authority was discredited and crumbled, it was necessary to make the world anew. Kurlansky assumes that this was limited to the student rebels, but he underplays the undercurrent of worker radicalism that was important in Europe. When the workers at Berliet, a French truck company, occupied their factory, they rearranged the letters in the sign outside to read *Liberté*. John Lennon's "Imagine," composed shortly after the decade's end, also memorably captured this 1960s spirit. In previous epochs revolutionaries not only aimed to overthrow capitalism but brandished "nationalization"

and socialist plans as pathways to the goal. The revolutionaries of the 1960s were too busy demonstrating against war and imperialism, occupying schools and factories, discovering the fragility of the planet or contesting gender identity to worry much about the specific program of anticapitalism. On the tenth anniversary of 1968, Régis Debray—a Guevarist radical in his youth, now an iconoclastic left-nationalist—complained that the rebels of 1968 had turned out to be as deluded about their real destination as Christopher Columbus, when he famously mistook the Americas for the Indies. Setting sail for Mao's China, the '60s revolutionaries had instead landed on the beaches of California, where many succumbed to New Age fancies, exalting individual subjectivity to the point where nothing else counted, neither the constraints of capitalism nor the forms of collectivity needed to allow individuals to flourish. Debray was concerned not just with individual sellouts but a larger impasse.

The uncomfortable element of truth in Debray's analysis stemmed in part from the eventual defeat of the project of the "self-managed society," as it had been conceived up to that time. Students and workers could exercise pressure on the authorities by occupying colleges and workplaces, but these turned out not to be society's commanding heights. And, in a modern economy, polity and media regime, to occupy was not to control. Calling for the abolition of property and money as abstract entities didn't help when what was needed was to grasp the way they worked and how they could be changed.

It is a weakness of Kurlansky's book, as it was of the movements of the time, that too little attention is paid to the power-holders, who contained the challenges of 1968 and subsequently launched offensives of their own. In the aftermath of the 1960s, it was to be the right, not the left, that reinvigorated capitalism and the urgency of an ideological struggle to defend and extend it. From their positions on the frontlines against campus revolt, Ronald Reagan, then governor of California, and Margaret Thatcher, education minister in 1970, saw the need to rediscover the virtues of the market and roll back a welfare state and an organized capitalism that had both enabled the postwar boom and spawned the 1960s revolts. The neoliberals and neoconservatives were not above stealing the watchwords of their antagonists. The calls for "power to the people," or for citizens to control their own lives, were adapted to become war cries of the right, by means of the privatization of all aspiration.

The right-wing think tanks were to prove more powerful than the tanks of the Warsaw Pact. Kurlansky quotes Jacek Kuron, the Polish revolutionary of 1989 as well as 1968, as saying, "near tears":

The one thing I regret is participating in the first government [postcommunist]. My participation helped people accept capitalism...I thought capitalism was self-reforming. It's not. It's like Russia—controlled by only a small group because capitalism needs capital. Here now [in Poland] half the population is on the edge of hunger and the other half feels successful.

Reading this book I was prompted to ask myself whether another global upheaval like 1968 could happen again. I came to the conclusion that it is almost inevitable. In France today the two Trotskyist groups that came to the fore in 1968 recently obtained 31 percent support in an opinion poll, ahead of the Socialists as well as the Communists. But this is not the reason another test looms. It is because we really have now reached the interactive stage of the communications revolution. In 1964 McLuhan gave a brilliantly prescient summary of this revolution, in a passage quoted in Nairn's 1968 essay:

Wealth and work become information factors and totally new structures are needed.... With electronic technology, the new kinds of instant interdependence and interprocess that take over production, also enter the markets and social organizations. For this reason markets and education designed to cope with the products of servile toil and mechanical production are no longer adequate. Our education has long ago acquired the fragmentary and piece-meal character of mechanism. It is now under increasing pressure to acquire the depth and interrelation that are indispensable in the all-at-once world of electric organization.

All these processes are far more advanced today than they were in 1968. The world is no longer divided by the cold war. It's true that the Islamic world is culturally resistant to the West, but it is now within the same global communications space. All this persuades me that there is a greater potential today for a type of "global storm" that will see even stranger alignments and interconnections. So perhaps, as we used to say, 1968 was just a rehearsal. The actors were still trusting too much to improvisation and had yet really to understand their parts. Will their successors be better prepared next time? ■



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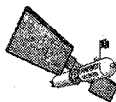
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POSITIONS AVAILABLE

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PUZZLE NO. 2926

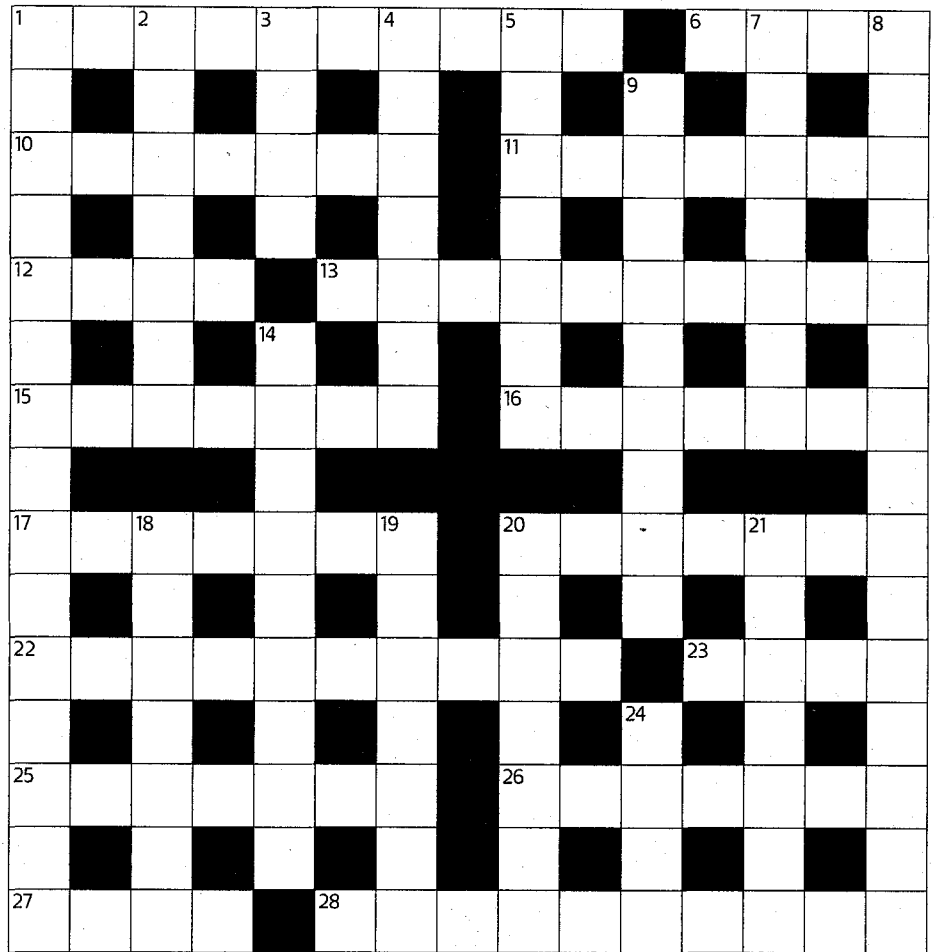
FRANK W. LEWIS

ACROSS

- 1 Vincent's brother and Republican Bob, when about it, make something like a transit. (10)
- 6 When Ridinghood's nemesis returns, it's the thing it's easy to go with. (4)
- 10 A Kipling character soon becomes a problem, when appearing in Oriental costume. (7)
- 11 Detailed listings show a gambling game to be surrounded by evil sin. (7)
- 12 See 24 down
- 13 Company religion, held by the opinionated. (4,6)
- 15 What one does before one totters in the wrong street around the Orient? (7)
- 16 Concerning a mixed lot in Vitamin A? (7)
- 17 Whirling around and finding little Edward giving up the ghost? (7)
- 20 Certainly not the road to peace, being described as the fastest speed that could finally be pulled out of a hat. (7)
- 22 Shy, nervous, heavenly lion heads to a frantic gentile for a fancy name for dishing up the dirt. (10)
- 23 and 3 down The kind of sound you don't want to hear from your gears, so make a happy expression at the sound of the bell! (8)
- 25 Place where it's all right to get in a watery start. (7)
- 26 In Kenya, and in the open air, obituaries make it obvious. (7)
- 27 and 28 A word of warning, of course—"Lard" typically should be responsible for cutting things down! (14)

DOWN

- 1 If you have a calendar that shows one number per page, you might be doing it, even though you have to go to work. (6,3,3,3)
- 2 In a way, seen to be about your Uncle's make-up, which is altogether "all together." (2,5)
- 3 See 23 across
- 4 Fabrications about the foolish person—and young girls that go out with the lads. (7)



- 5 You might expect to find the one who works on the edge of things in better shape. (7)
- 7 A variant reading might be "a voting into office when there is no point to it, at first." (7)
- 8 Is it what goes on in the mind of the postcard sender who is lonesome for you—or just a wild goose chase? (7,8)
- 9 A publicity speculation for what Tom Sawyer was supposed to have? (9)
- 14 Oldtime award with which I've a problem that's internal to it. (9)
- 18 One who says "Pooh-pooh!" becomes a forest animal, which is about the last thing you might expect to find in Paris! (7)
- 19 A very big man who brings up the record when one has a new hat style. (7)
- 20 The old-fashioned driver was a funny fellow—on a mad, mad emperor. (7)

- 21 It's not quite April, alternatively I find it still valid independently of observation. (1,6)
- 24 and 12 across A French city on a monstrous lake might have a pleasant quality. (8)

SOLUTION TO PUZZLE NO. 2925

W	E	A	T	H	E	R	B	A	L	L	O	O	N	S
O	N	A	E	M	O	B	A							
R	U	N	I	N	A	S	P	E	N	L	E	A	F	
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- Instant-on, flicker-free light

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John Adams - Fram

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